

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

\* HISTORIC

Dakota Apartments

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

1 West 72nd Street (Central Park West)

\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

New York

\_\_ VICINITY OF

19th

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

New York

New York

**3 CLASSIFICATION****CATEGORY**

\_\_ DISTRICT  
 BUILDING(S)  
\_\_ STRUCTURE  
\_\_ SITE  
\_\_ OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

\_\_ PUBLIC  
 PRIVATE  
\_\_ BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
\_\_ IN PROCESS  
\_\_ BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

OCCUPIED  
\_\_ UNOCCUPIED  
\_\_ WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
 YES: RESTRICTED  
\_\_ YES: UNRESTRICTED  
\_\_ NO

**PRESENT USE**

\_\_ AGRICULTURE  
\_\_ COMMERCIAL  
\_\_ EDUCATIONAL  
\_\_ ENTERTAINMENT  
\_\_ GOVERNMENT  
\_\_ INDUSTRIAL  
\_\_ MILITARY  
\_\_ MUSEUM  
\_\_ PARK  
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
\_\_ RELIGIOUS  
\_\_ SCIENTIFIC  
\_\_ TRANSPORTATION  
\_\_ OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

The Dakota Inc. c/o Mr. Douglas Gibbons

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Hollyday and Ives (RE Agent) 745 Fifth Avenue

CITY, TOWN

STATE

New York

\_\_ VICINITY OF

New York 10022

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

New York County Hall of Recorder

STREET &amp; NUMBER

31 Chambers Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

New York

New York

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey, CAHP

DATE

1968

 FEDERAL \_\_ STATE \_\_ COUNTY \_\_ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Washington

D.C.

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Original plans and construction: On file at the Plans Desk at the Building Department, Municipal Building, New York, is the original "Detailed Statement of Specifications for New Buildings" for the Dakota. The application, No. 829, was submitted on September 29, 1880, and approved on October 19, 1880. The following information is abstracted from that statement. The depth of the foundation walls from curb level was to be "from 10 to 18 feet"; the foundation was to be laid "on solid rock," and the foundation walls were to be "From 3 to 4 feet" thick, constructed of "Blue stone laid in cement mortar." All floors were "to have rolled beams from 6 to 12 ins. deep," and "Beams on all floors [were] to be from 3 to 4 feet apart." The floors were to be "arched in brick or terra cotta." The hall partitions were to be of "fireproof blocks. All other partitions either or brick or fireproof blocks." The thickness of the exterior walls of the first story was to be "24 to 28 inches"; second through fourth stories, "20 to 24 inches"; fifth and sixth stories, "16 to 20 inches"; above sixth story, "12 to 16 inches." The staircases were to be fireproof: "Main staircases of iron, marble treads--Servants' stairs of iron." The seven elevators were to be "all enclosed in brick." The building was to be occupied as a "Family Hotel. Suits [sic] of Apartments for forty [sic] two families besides Janitors" with "Six families on each floor a part of building on 1st floor & basement to be used as a public Restaurant--Janitors families in basement." The cost of construction was estimated to be "about \$1000000.00"

The New York Daily Graphic described the Dakota in detail:

The building is of the Renaissance style of architecture, built of buff brick, with carved Nova Scotia freestone trimmings and terra cotta ornamentation. Although there is a profusion of ornament in the shape of bay and octagon windows, niches, balconies, and balustrades, with spandrels and panels in beautiful terra cotta work and heavy carved cornices, the size and massive construction of the edifice prevent any appearance of superfluity. The building is about 200 feet square and 10 stories high, the upper two stories being in the handsome mansard roof which, with its peaks and gables, surrounded by ornate copper work cresting and finials, and relieved by dormer and oriel windows, gives the entire structure an air of lightness and elegance. The construction as of the most massive character, and the aim of the owners has been to produce a building monumental in solidity and perfectly fireproof. The brick and mason work is of unusual weight, the walls being in some places four feet thick, and the partitions and flooring have iron beams and framing, filled in with concrete and fireproof material.

On the Seventy-third-street side there is a handsome doorway, and on the Seventy-second-street front a fine arched carriage entrance, with groined roof and elegant stone carving. Both entrances lead into the inner court, from which four separate passages afford access to the interior of the building. From the ground floor four fine bronze staircases, the metal work beautifully wrought and the walls wainscoted in rare marbles and choice hard woods, and four luxuriously fitted elevators, of the latest and safest construction, afford means of reaching the upper floors. The ladies' sitting room adjoining the staircase in the south-

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1880-1884

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Henry J. Hardenbergh (1847-1918)

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

One of the earliest large scale apartment houses, the Dakota has changed little since its construction in 1880-1884. The architect, Henry Hardenbergh was also the architect of the Copley Plaza Hotel in Boston and the Waldorf-Astoria and the Plaza in New York. It was once known as "Clark's Folly" because Edward S. Clark, heir to the Singer Sewing Machine fortune built it.

"In the 1880s increasing numbers of New Yorkers discovered that apartment houses, with elevators, central heating, efficient plumbing, and electricity, eased many of the difficulties of urban life. Even the very rich, who could afford to own mansions, overcame their fashionable prejudices and began to find rental accommodations acceptable. The New York paradigm for people at the top of the social and economic totem pole was typified by the Dakota Apartments, so named because the neighborhood in which the structure was raised--at Central Park West, between Seventy-Second and Seventy-Third Streets--was thought to be as remote from the heart of Manhattan as the Dakota Territory. Designed in the manner of the German Renaissance by Henry Janeway Hardenbergh, this communal palace, with its profusion of peaked roofs, chimneys, dormers, and sculptured ornament, was the first of the great super-block buildings with a central drive-in courtyard. Here, the conveniences of a private residence were combined, in multiple, with the services of a luxury hotel. Individual suites were carefully laid out to provide a maximum of privacy and light, and, as the above plan indicates, the latest of modern facilities for everyone but the servants, whose own comparatively cramped quarters lacked bathtubs."<sup>1</sup>

The New York Daily Graphic on Wednesday, September 10, 1884, noted

Probably not one stranger out of fifty who ride over the elevated roads or on either of the rivers does not ask the name of the stately building which stands west of Central Park, between Seventy-second and Seventy-third streets. If there is such a person the chances are that he is blind or nearsighted. The name of the building is the Dakota Apartment House, and it is the largest, most substantial, and most conveniently arranged apartment house of the sort in this country. It stands on the crest of the West Side Plateau, on the highest portion of

<sup>1</sup>American Heritage History of Notable American Houses. p.291, American Heritage Publishing Co., 1971

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre  
 UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 8	5, 8, 6, 37, 0	4, 5, 1, 4, 2, 5, 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

As seen on the enclosed plat map, the Dakota Apartments occupies a 204.4 by 200.2-1/2 foot lot on the east end of the city block bounded by 72nd and 73rd Streets, and Central Park West and Columbus Avenue.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Carolyn Pitts, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

National Park Service - Historic Sites Survey

DATE

8/10/76

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street NW.

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL      STATE      LOCAL     

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

<b>FOR NPS USE ONLY</b>	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
	DATE
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE
ATTEST:	DATE
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	

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east corner, will be decorated by the Misses Greatorex, a guarantee that the work upon it will be artistic and unconventional. There are four iron staircases and four elevators inclosed in massive brick walls and extending from the cellar to the kitchens and servants' quarters in the upper stories, separate from the rest of the house, which can be used for domestic purposes, carrying furniture, merchandise, &c. There are electric bells to each elevator, and a complete system of electric communication throughout the house.

The building is in four great divisions, which inclose a courtyard as large as half a dozen ordinary buildings. This gives every room in the house light, sunshine, and ventilation. Under this courtyard is the basement, into which lead broad entrances for the use of tradesmen's teams. Here are situated the most interesting portions of the building, or at least the most novel ones. The floor is of asphaltum, as dry and hard as rock. This basement, also, has a courtyard as large as the one above, and lighted by two huge latticed manholes, which look like a couple of green flower beds in the stone flooring. Off of this yard are the storerooms of the house, in which the management will store the furniture and trunks of the tenants free of charge. A porter is assigned to this duty alone. The rooms are all marble floored, lighted and heated, and accessible at all hours of the day or night. The rooms of the servants are also on this floor. These consist of separate dining and toilet rooms for the male and female servants and a male reading and smoking room. These are not for the personal servants of the tenants of the building who prefer it on the table d'hote plan. Opening from the lower court, and extending under the open ground in the rear of the building, a large vault, 150 feet long 60 feet wide, and 18 feet deep, is now being excavated. When finished it will contain the steam boilers, steam engines, &c., for hoisting, pumping, &c., and the dynamos for supplying electric illumination in the Dakota and adjoining 27 houses. The vault will be roofed with iron beams and brick filling arches and made flush with the land in the rear of the building, 225 feet deep, which will be laid out as a garden. The boilers, with the furnaces, machinery, &c., will thus be located outside the walls of the building safely remote.

The first floor contains the dining rooms, which are finished in a perfect manner. In this case these words really mean something. The floors are of marble and inlaid. The base of the walls is of English quartered oak, carved by hand. The upper portions are finished in bronze bas-relief work, and the ceilings are also quartered oak, beautifully carved. The effect is that of an old English baronial hall, with the dingy massiveness brightened and freshened without losing any of its richness. The effect is heightened by a large Scotch brownstone engraved fireplace, which ornaments the centre of the room. The business office has oral communication with every portion of the house, and the wants of the tenants can be attended to as quickly as can be done by human ingenuity and a perfectly arranged service.

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In addition to the four main staircases mentioned before, which are finished in bronze and marble, there are four iron staircases for servants, four passenger elevators, and four servants' elevators.

The Dakota will be divided into about 65 different suites of apartments, each containing from four to twenty separate rooms, so that accommodations can be furnished either for bachelors or for large families. There is an air of grandeur and elegance not only about the halls and stairways but also about the separate apartments that cannot probably be found in any other house of this kind in the country. The parlors in some instances are 25 by 40 feet, with other rooms in proportion, and there are in many cases private halls to the suites, furnished with fine bronze mantels, tiled hearths, and ornamental open fireplaces. The parlors, libraries, reception and dining rooms are all cabinet trimmed, paneled, and wainscoted in mahogany, oak, and other attractive and durable woods, and are furnished with carved buffets and mantels, mirrors, tiled hearths and open grate fireplaces, and parqueted floors. The kitchens are spacious, and provided with ranges, with ventilating hoods, all with Minton tiled facing and marble wainscoting. There are porcelain washtubs, large storerooms and closets, and butlers' pantries, equipped in the most complete manner, and each suite has its private bathrooms and closets, fitted with the most approved scientific sanitary appliances.

The plumbing and hygienic arrangements are fully equal to anything in this country. On the top story are six tanks, holding 5,000 gallons of water each, and supplied by steam pumps having a daily capacity of 2,000,000 gallons, and about 200 miles of pipe have been used in effecting its circulation. Not only in the sanitary appliances, but in every other department, there is a completeness that is surprising. The precautions taken to secure proper ventilation and a pure atmosphere, to insure safety to occupants in cases of fire or panic, and to extinguish fire are perfect. When opened the comfort and convenience of the guests will be further insured by the accommodations of the dining rooms, laundry, and barber's shop, run on the most improved plan, in connection with the building. It is the perfection of the apartment style of living, and guarantees to the tenants comforts which would require unlimited wealth to procure in a private residence. The wisest precautions have been taken to insure freedom from the ordinary cares of the household to the fortunate tenants. For instance, the coal and kindling wood are purchased by the manager in large quantities and sold to the tenants, who take in exchange for their

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money tickets which are presented at the office, and the fuel is carried to their rooms in convenient quantities, thereby saving the user from any of the necessary troubles in buying and storage. This may seem like a small matter, but it is only one of the hundred plans taken by the owners to secure the comfort of the tenants.

It is almost needless to state that the building is as nearly fireproof as any which can be erected. There are continuous passageways extending through the four divisions on the roof; ninth, eighth, and first stories. On the tenth floor there is provision for a play room and gymnasium for the children, well lighted and ventilated and commanding a grand view of the city and surroundings, while on the ninth floor there will be extra servants' rooms, private laundries and drying rooms, dormitories for transient male and female servants and attachés of the building, and lavatories, toilet rooms, and bathrooms for their use.

The work on both the Dakota and the neighboring apartment house and private dwellings owned by the estate has been done not only in the most careful manner, but with a view to permanence and convenience, and to symmetry as well as beauty of appearance. The greatest skill and experience and the best materials large means could command have been employed, and the manner in which the work in each department has been done reflects the greatest credit on those entrusted with it, especially upon the architect, Mr. H. J. Hardenbergh, who has supervised the work from its commencement to its now rapidly approaching completion.

Both the Dakota, the private residences, and the smaller apartment house are now ready for occupation, and we need hardly comment on the peculiar attractions they will possess for those who have experienced a desire for an eligible residence on the west side. The natural and artificial attributes of the position are all in favor of the buildings, which for comfort, ample space, salubrity, convenience, and accessibility cannot be excelled, and a glance at our description will suffice to show that everything skill could furnish, ingenuity and experience suggest has been supplied. The managers of the Clark estate, the owners of the property, are well known for their fairness and liberality to tenants, and every care will be taken to insure comfort and well-being. The rents are moderate when compared with the accommodations furnished, and those desiring to secure either dwellings or apartments can examine plans, &c., and make arrangements at the office of the estate, at No. 25 West Twenty-third-street, New York.

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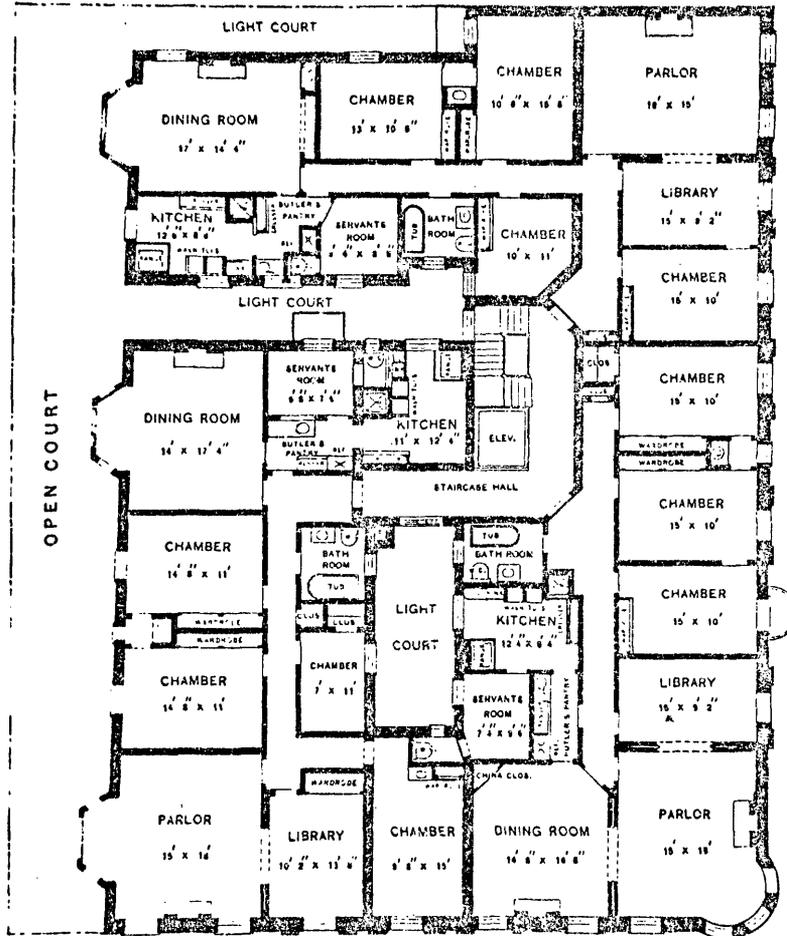
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There have been a few alterations--the original gardens and tennis courts are gone and some apartment interiors have been modified.



Above: the well-thought-out interior plan of three adjoining apartments

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land in the city, and overlooks the entire island and the surrounding country. From the east one has a bird's-eye view of Central Park. The reservoir castle and the picturesque lake, the museums, and the mall are all shown at a glance. From this point also can be seen Long Island Sound in the distance, and the hills of Brooklyn. From the north one looks down on High Bridge and the tall reservoir tower, which looks as slender as a needle. From the west can be seen the Palisades, the Orange Mountains, and the broad Hudson, which narrows into a silver thread as the double row of hills close together far away in the distance. Looking south one sees the tall towers of the Brooklyn Bridge, Governor's Island, and far beyond the green hills of Staten Island and the blue waters of the Lower Bay. Every prominent landmark in the landscape can be discerned from this location, and the great buildings of the lower city are as prominently marked as if the sightseer were floating over the island in a balloon. At this elevation every breeze which moves across Manhattan from any direction is felt. This is a feature which needs no emphasis to make attractive such stifling days as these.

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Photographs and Their Descriptions

Location: Dakota Apartments, New York, New York

Photo credit: Museum of the City of New York, and HABS

Photo description: 1. Facade - old photo  
2. Facade  
3. Detail of door  
4. Stairway in first floor public hall  
5. Interior details: column, glass insert on laminated sliding door, plaster ceiling detail