

New York Amsterdam News Building
2293 Seventh Avenue
New York City
New York

HABS No. NY-5693

HABS
NY,
31-NBYO,
98-

PHOTOGRAPHS

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS...

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013-7127

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ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE NEW YORK	COUNTY NEW YORK	TOWN OR VICINITY NEW YORK
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) NEW YORK AMSTERDAM NEWS BUILDING		HABS NO. NY-5693
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) 2293 Seventh Avenue		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) c1900	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE)	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) Home of the <u>Amsterdam News</u> , one of the Nation's most prominent newspapers for Blacks.		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE)		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Ashlar brownstone		
HAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) Three stories over a raised basement, rectangular in plan.		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE Flat roof, front side entrance in recess with projecting lintel, basement and first story commercial entrances and openings, basement story tiled hood.		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED)		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Private		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) Department of Interior. <u>National Register of Historic Places, Vol. II, 1976, p.364.</u>		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Eleni Silverman Historian, HABS	DATE 5/84	

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

Addendum to
NEW YORK AMSTERDAM NEWS BUILDING

HABS No. NY-5693
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One page of data previously transmitted to the Library of Congress.

Location: 2293 Seventh Avenue, east side of the street, New
York, New York County, New York

USGS Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates
18.589000.4518540

Significance: The Amsterdam News, one of America's most prominent
and respected black newspapers, was published here
during its years of greatest growth and national
appeal, 1916-1938.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Founded in December 1909 by James H. Anderson, the New York Amsterdam News became a prominent voice for the black community in New York and the entire country. Originally produced in Anderson's West 165th Street home, the paper outgrew its quarters twice. By 1916, the paper's growth in circulation warranted the move to Seventh Avenue.

The paper's founding coincided with the organization of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) at a time when a number of civil rights activists were becoming increasingly disenchanted with the accomodationist policies espoused by Booker T. Washington. The editorial policy of the Amsterdam News paralleled this shift in thought regarding appropriate and effective social action.

From its outset, the News strove to identify and comment upon the main issues facing blacks, and recommend action regarding them. When the paper was founded, the major issue it was involved in was lynching. With other organs of the black press, the News fought against lynching by identifying elected officials (including President Harding) and candidates who failed to state a position on the subject, and supporting the Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill. Even after the defeat of the bill, the paper kept the issue in its pages.

During the years 1916 to 1938, the News experienced its greatest growth in circulation and in local and national attention, expanding from a Harlem community paper to one of nationwide stature among blacks. In the 1920s and thirties, the paper increased in size from 12 pages to approximately 25. Edward A. Warren became publisher and general manager in 1916, serving in those capacities until his death in 1921. From 1921 to 1926, the News was published by founder Anderson and Warren's widow, Sadie Warren, and daughter Odessa Morse. Sadie Warren married William H. Davis in 1926, the latter becoming the paper's president and general manager.

A year later, in December 1927, the Amsterdam News released its Christmas issue in rotogravure (a technique involving printing from a cylindrical surface with a rotary press), becoming the first black-owned weekly to use that method. Other significant innovations achieved by the paper include being the second paper to be admitted to the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) in October 1930, and becoming in 1936 the first black newspaper to be unionized in all departments.

A prolific and scholarly group of black leaders were editors throughout the paper's history. Among these were T. Thomas Fortune, George W. Harris, Obie McCollum, John Lewis Clark, Earl Brown, Dan Burley, Julius J. Adams, Alger Adams, Thomas Watkins, S.W. Carlington, Stanley Ross, T.D. Sellers, Dr. G. James Fleming, and James Hicks. T. Thomas Fortune, along with other editors from the black press, were selected as members of Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Black Brain Trust" which was established to aid in the distribution of positive information on the programs of the New Deal to blacks.

Following the tradition established by earlier black newspapers, the News disseminated information relating to issues of discrimination against blacks. Because of New York City's status as having the largest black community in the country, the Amsterdam News assumed an especial role of dynamic, effective, and articulate leadership which was felt nationwide. Today the paper is published at 2340 Eighth Avenue in New York City.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

- A. General Statement: 2293 Seventh Avenue is the center unit of five four-story row houses which are flanked by a five-story brick tenement at each end. The upper two floors of the row houses are residential while the lower two are commercial storefronts. The commercial spaces seem to have been renovated and altered several times. These highly stylized Greek Revival buildings occupy the entire east side of Seventh Avenue between West 135th and West 134th Streets. The units vary only in slight details and finish. All the buildings are connected and have a service yard accessible from either West 135th or West 134th Streets. Although structurally sound, the building is in need of repair. Much of the brownstone is spalling and the lintel above the door and window above needs replacing.
- B. Description of Exterior:
1. Dimensions: The building is rectangular, and is approximately 15 feet wide on the street facade.
 2. Walls: brownstone exterior finish on facade
 3. Structural system: stone masonry exterior bearing walls with wood joists, rafters, and interior stud walls

4. Porch: The main entrance is reached via a small, concrete uncovered porch, 11 steps from the sidewalk. The first floor is four steps below the sidewalk.
7. Windows: Each of the upper two floors have three, equally spaced, wooden double-hung windows directly above each other. The second floor has a large picture window below the two left windows. The main entrance is from the second floor and is directly below the third window. All six double-hung windows have decorated raised brownstone lintels with modillions and trim.
8. Roof: The building is topped by a projecting galvanized iron, painted cornice supported by four equally spaced modillions.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

New York Amsterdam News Building, National Historic Landmark nomination form, 1975.

Prepared and transmitted by: Holly K. Chamberlain
Historian
HABS
July 23, 1987