National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*Type all entries—complete applicable sections

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ype all entries—complete applicable se	ctions		
1. Name			
nistoric Tudor City Historic Dist	rict		
and or common			
2. Location			
treet & number see continuation s	heet		_ not for publication
ity, town New York	vicinity of		
tate New York code	036 county	New York	code 061
3. Classification			
Category X district Duilding(s) Structure Site Ownership Public Private Doth Public Acquisition NA in process NA being considered	Status X occupied — unoccupied — work in progress Accessible — yes: restricted X yes: unrestricted no	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park x private residence religious scientific transportation other:
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ity, town New York		state	New York
6. Representation i	n Existing S	Surveys	
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7. Description

Condition excellent	deteriorated	Check one X unaltered	Check onex original site	
x good	ruins	_x_ altered	moved date _	NA
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Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Tudor City Historic District is located at the eastern end of East 41st, East 42nd, and East 43rd streets between First and Second avenues in New York County, New York. The historic district includes fourteen contributing buildings and two contributing structures (parks). The entire complex was designed and constructed between 1925 and 1930. Some of the features received minor alterations in the early 1950s; however, the buildings and structures (parks) all retain sufficient integrity of setting, location, and original design to meet the criteria for NR listing. All of the contributing features are related by their style, materials, and/or development history. Twelve of the fourteen buildings and the two parks are part of the Fred F. French Company's Tudor City development. The other two buildings are historically and stylistically related to this development and are set amid the Fred F. French buildings. Most of the buildings within the Tudor City Historic District are set apart from the surrounding city by their location on a raised site with no through streets (East 42nd Street runs beneath most of the district). The historic district is surrounded by a mix of predominantly high-rise residential, commercial and institutional buildings that are not directly related to the historic district. Of interest in the vicinity are the United Nations complex and a Con Edison power station, both located to the east across First Avenue; the Beaux-Arts apartments (Raymond Hood, architect) and the former Beaux-Arts Institute of Design on East 44th Street to the north of the district; the Ford Foundation's Headquarters, immediately to the west of the district on East 41st and East 42nd streets; and the Daily News Building and Pfizer Building, on opposite corners on the west side of Second Avenue and East 42nd Street. The district boundaries were drawn to include all of the contributing buildings erected by Fred F. French and two buildings not part of the French development which are located within the complex and are stylistically and historically related to it. On the southwest corner of Tudor City Place and East 41st Street is an eighteen-story apartment building erected just after World War II as a part of Tudor City. building lacks the Tudor ornament of the earlier buildings and is of little architectural interest; the district boundaries were drawn to exclude it. There are four noncontributing mid-nineteenth-century row houses within the boundaries of the historic district that survive as fragments of the once continuous streetscapes of brownstone residences.

The cohesive quality of the Tudor City Historic District is the result of Fred F. French's plan to build an apartment complex with a unified Tudor design theme. The architects and designers of Tudor City used a broad range of sixteenth-century English inspired detail ranging from such generic Tudor forms as wide pointed arches, large multi-paned windows, pinnacles, crenellated rooflines, tall chimneys, quatrefoils, parapets, fish bladder moldings, five-petaled Tudor roses, portcullises (the badge of the Beaufort family and, through their descendants, a symbol of the Tudor sovereigns), rampant lions carrying standards, etc., to features based on specific old English precedents, such as the decorative terra-cotta work modeled after that on Sutton Place, Surry (see item 8, significance).

Much of the Tudor effect is gained through the use of carved or cast-stone and terracotta detail. It is not, however, only the masonry details that contribute to the Tudor ambiance. Each building has sizable expanses of glass, with all windows separated into small panes resembling the fenestration of such great sixteenth-century houses as Barrington Court, Somerset; Haddon Hall, Derbyshire; Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire; Audley End, Essex; and Hatfield House, Hertfordshire. The lower stories of many of the buildings

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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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Addresses within the Tudor City Historic District

East 41st Street: 304-324; 305-351

East 42nd Street: 304-320

East 43rd Street: 328-340; 315-333

Tudor City Place: 5-45; west side between 41st and 43rd streets (approximately 24 and

44 Tudor City place--North Park and South Park)

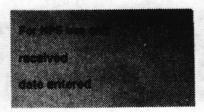
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Ownership

Hatfield House (304-308 East 41st Street), Hardwicke Hall (314 East 41st Street), and Haddon Hall (318-324 East 41st Street):

Harry B. Helmsley 304 East 41st Street Company 60 East 42nd Street New York, NY 10017

Essex House (325 East 41st Street)

Harry B. Helmsley 325 East 41st Street Company 60 East 42nd Street New York, NY 10017

Prospect Hill Apartments (329-335 East 41st Street)

President, Board of Directors 333 East 41st Street Corp. 333 East 41st Street New York, NY 10017

337 East 41st Street

Harry B. Helmsley South Assemblage Comp. 60 East 42nd Street New York, NY 10017

Hotel Tudor (304 East 42nd Street and 305-309 East 41st Street)

Charles Goldberg 304 East 42nd Street Corp. 110-28 Jewel Avenue Forest Hills, NY 11375

Presbyterian Church of the Covenant and Parish House (310 East 42nd Street)

President of Presbytery of New York City 306-310 East 42nd Street

New York, NY 10017

Woodstock Tower (320 East 42nd Street)

Harry B. Helmsley 320 East 42nd Street Company 60 East 42nd Street

New York, NY 10017

The Hermitage (328-334 East 43rd Street)

John DeLorenzo 53 Irving Place New York, NY 10003

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336, 338, and 340 East 43rd Street

Harry B. Helmsley North Assemblage Company 60 East 42nd Street New York, NY 10017

The Cloister (315-21 East 43rd Street)

Harry B. Helmsley 321 East 43rd Street Comp. 60 East 42nd Street New York, NY 10017

The Manor (325-333 East 43rd Street)

Harry B. Helmsley 333 East 43rd Street Company 60 East 42nd Street New York, NY 10017

Windsor Tower (5 Tudor City Place)

Harry B. Helmsley

5 Tudor City Place Company

60 East 42nd Street New York, NY 10017

Tudor Tower (25 Tudor City Place)

Harry B. Helmsley

25 Tudor City Place Company

60 East 42nd Street New York, NY 10017

Prospect Tower (45 Tudor City Place)

Harry B. Helmsley

45 Tudor City Place Company

60 East 42nd Street New York, NY 10017

North Park (approximately 44 Tudor City Place)

Harry B. Helmsley North Assemblage Company 60 East 42nd Street New York, NY 10017

South Park (approximately 24 Tudor City Place)

Harry B. Helmsley South Assemblage Company 60 East 42nd Street New York, NY 10017

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are further articulated by diamond-paned windows and leaded-glass windows with stained-glass insets of heraldic and emblematic form. The wooden entrance doors are carved with such Tudor forms as linenfold panels and fish bladder tracery and decorated with hardware based on sixteenth-century precedents. Even the metal revolving door frames and hanging and standing lamps are Tudor in the derivation of their ornament. The Tudor detailing can also be found in the public lobbies of the Tudor City buildings. Interior details include half timbering, carved woodwork, beamed ceilings, arched openings, plaster friezes and rosettes, and Tudor style fixtures and furnishings. The two Tudor City parks were planned as a complement to the apartment buildings and apartment hotels and they lend to the community the suburban atmosphere that Fred F. French sought when he planned Tudor City. The parks continue to serve the same purpose today as when they were planned and laid out.

There are three contributing buildings within the historic district that either were not part of French's development or which do not have the Tudor veneer found on most of the buildings. The Hotel Tudor is the final contributing building erected by the Fred F. French Company as a part of the Tudor City development. This is the only building erected by French that does not have Tudor ornament. The brick used for the building is, however, identical to that used on the other buildings and its facade, with its pattern of pulled bricks, complements the design of the earlier Tudor City structures which adjoin it. Set between Woodstock Tower and the Hotel Tudor, on East 42nd Street, is the Presbyterian Church of the Covenant, which is closely associated with Tudor City in its architectural development. This church was originally erected in 1871 to serve the middle-class population then settling in the neighborhood. After Tudor City was begun, half of the original church was demolished and the remaining half was incorporated into a new Neo-Tudor style building. The Prospect Hill Apartments at 333 East 41st Street is a cooperative apartment house begun in 1925, just a few months before the Tudor City plan was announced. Prospect Hill Apartments corresponds in its design to the Tudor City buildings and is a contributing element located in the middle of the historic district.

Building List

This list contains a brief description of each building within the historic district. The unit number of the buildings erected by Fred F. French refers to the building designation within the French scheme and indicates the order in which buildings were designed and erected. There is no Tudor City Third Unit.

East 41st Street, north side between Second Avenue and Tudor City Place

305-309 East 41st Street. This is the rear elevation of the Hotel Tudor as described at 304 East 42nd Street

Essex House. 325 East 41st Street (Tudor City Tenth Unit). 1929. Essex House is a tenstory apartment house massed in two separate parts with a court in between. The far ends of each wing of Essex House have full-height terra-cotta bays that rest on corbels in the form of winged monsters. The entrance porch, which connects the two wings of the building, has a flagstone paving, a bench, original doors, four iron standing lamps, etc. There are multi-paned casement windows. The lobby contains original Tudor detail. (photo 3)

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Prospect Hill Apartments. 333 East 41st Street. Toensfeldt-Boughton, engineers and architects, 1925. Prospect Hill Apartments predates Tudor City by a few months. The six-story cooperative apartment house has modest Tudor detail, particularly evident around the entrance. The style of this building may have influenced French's choice of Tudor detail for his complex. (photo 3)

337 East 41st Street. Hubert & Pirsson, architects, 1870. This altered Italianate style brownstone row house dates from the period when this area was built up almost entirely with similar buildings. It is a non-contributing element in the historic district. (photo I-1)

East 41st Street, south side between Second Avenue and Tudor City Place

Hatfield House. 304 East 41st Street (Tudor City Eighth Unit -- in part), 1928. Hatfield House is a fifteen-story apartment hotel named for a famous Elizabethan house in Hertfordshire. The building is the western section of a three-part structure that includes Haddon Hall and Hardwicke Hall. Hatfield House contains original casement windows, a metal revolving door frame with Tudor detail, a porch with a tile floor, etc. It is crowned by a crenellated tower with oriel window that hides the water In front of this is a pyramidal tower. tower. (photo 2)

Hardwicke Hall. 314 East 41st Street (Tudor City Eighth Unit--in part), 1928. Hardwicke Hall is an eleven-story building named for the famous English house, Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire. The building is the central section of a three-part unit that includes Haddon Hall and Hatfield House. Among the original features are a stone base with quatrefoils and Gothic hoods and original doors, glass, hardware, and casement windows. There is a tower on the roof hiding the water tower. (photo 2)

Haddon Hall. 324 East 41st Street (Tudor City Eighth Unit--in part), 1928. Haddon Hall is an eleven-story building named for Haddon Hall, a house in Derbyshire. The building is the eastern section of a three-part structure that includes Hardwicke Hall and Hatfield House. The apartment house has a three-story stone base with Gothic hoods and quatrefoils. It is crowned by a parapet and a tower with a chimney. It has a pair of original doors with colored glass insets, original lamps, and casement windows. (photo 2)

East 42nd Street, south side between Second Avenue and First Avenue

Hotel Tudor. 304 East 42nd Street (Tudor City Eleventh Unit), 1930. The Hotel Tudor is the only building in the Tudor City complex that was not erected for permanent residence and is the only structure that does not use Tudor decorative forms. The building is a transient hotel with Art Deco detail. The twenty-story building is faced with brick patterned by the use of pulled bricks. It has casement windows and a crowning tower. The hotel extends through the block to East 41st Street. In 1950-52, when the level of 42nd Street was realigned, the entrance to the hotel was lowered several feet. The new entrance was designed to complement the building's original design and this alteration is imperceptible today. (photos 3 and 7)

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Church of the Covenant. 310 East 42nd Street. J.C. Cady, 1871; Mayer & Mathieu, 1927; Adams & Woodbridge, 1950. The Presbyterian Church of the Covenant includes sections that date from three periods. The original church was the work of J.C. Cady, a leading late nineteenth century ecclesiastical architect (this was his first major church). The four western bays with Victorian Gothic windows and large dormers are the work of Cady. In 1927, while Tudor City was under construction, the eastern half of the church was demolished and it was replaced by a church house designed in a Neo-Tudor style to match that of the neighboring complex. The church house is connected to the surviving section of the church. In 1950, when 42nd Street was realigned, a new entrance terrace and steps had to be added, connecting the church and the street. This work was undertaken by a firm that designed many churches and its design is in keeping with the Tudor form of the church. (photo 8)

Woodstock Tower. 320 East 42nd Street (Tudor City Seventh Unit), 1928-29. Woodstock Tower is a thirty-two story apartment hotel. It is the only residential building in the complex that is entered from 42nd Street. In 1951 the base of the building was lowered due to the realignment of 42nd Street. The present base was designed in a Neo-Tudor manner and is indistinguishable from the original structure. The focal point of the Woodstock's facade is the center of the fifth and sixth floors where there is a three-bay-wide composition of Gothic hoods, thin colonnettes, and arched spandrels. The building has a series of setback and originally culminated in a flèche which has been removed. The original casement windows are extant.

East 43rd Street, north side between Second Avenue and Tudor City Place

The Cloister. 321 East 43rd Street (Tudor City Fifth Unit), 1927. The Cloister is a symmetrical, ten-story apartment house. The brick building has a stone base and is crowned by a water tower pavilion with a small lodge and fleche. The entrance is set within a four-story frontispiece with a large lion that wears a crown and carries a shield. Other features of the building are lions on the roofline, casement windows, large symbolic birds, doors with linenfold panels, original hardware, leaded-glass windows, etc. (photo 9)

The Manor. 333 East 43rd Street (Tudor City Second Unit), 1926-27. The Manor was the first apartment house in the Tudor City complex. The ten-story building is constructed of brick trimmed with terra cotta modeled after the ornament on Sutton Place, Surry (1520-30). The piers at the corners of the end wings of this quatrepartite building are closely modeled on the octagonal buttresses of Sutton Place. Other notable forms on the Manor are the wide Tudor-arched entrances with portcullises in their spandrels, quatrefoil friezes, and raised pinnacles; the water tower surrounds with oriels and rampant lions carrying standards; quatrefoil parapets; and doors flanked by leaded-glass windows with the leading placed in such a manner that it gives the illusion of ancient cracks that have been resealed. (photos 1 and 9)

East 43rd Street, south side between Second Avenue and Tudor City Place

The Hermitage. 330 East 43rd Street (Tudor City Sixth Unit), 1928. The Hermitage is a simple ten-story apartment house with terra-cotta trim. The building has casement windows, some massed in long horizontal bands. It is topped by a square pavilion

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with animal finials. Obelisks mark the corners of the building and a quatrefoil parapet runs along the roofline. In 1985, all of the original casement windows were removed.

336, 338, and 340 East 43rd Street. John Sexton, architect, 1870. These three altered Italianate style brownstone row houses date from the period when this area was built up almost entirely with similar buildings. They are non-contributing elements within the historic district. (photo I-2)

Tudor City Place, east side between East 41st Street and East 43rd Street

Windsor Tower. 5 Tudor City Place (Tudor City Ninth Unit), 1930. Windsor Tower, with its 790 apartments, was the largest unit in the Tudor City complex. The apartment hotel is similar in its massing to the other buildings on Tudor City Place. It is the only one of these three units that has windows facing east. The twenty-two story brick and terra-cotta building is surmounted by a reliquary box-like structure with a weathervane. The building is entered through a recessed porch with built-in benches. The base is ornamented with colored glass with octagonal stained-glass panels and by decorative finials and open arches. There is a pointed-arched arcade at the base of the building on First Avenue. Casement windows are extant.

Tudor Tower. 22 Tudor City Place (Tudor City Fourth Unit), 1926-27. Tudor Tower is almost identical in design to Prospect Tower and is similar to Windsor Tower, the buildings which flank it to the north and south. The building is brick with cream-colored ornament. The building contains the finest stained glass in Tudor City. There are large expanses of glass on the first floor facing Tudor City Place and there are other glass panels looking out to the north and south. Other interesting decorative details are doors with iron hinges, a recessed entrance porch, and carved monsters, animals, and foliage. The original casement windows are intact. There is a neon sign on the roof. (photo 4 and 5)

Prospect Tower. 45 Tudor City Place (Tudor City First Unit), 1926-27. Prospect Tower is a twenty-two story apartment hotel built of brick with pale yellow sandstone and terra-cotta trim. The building has multi-paned casement windows. Prospect Tower is a symmetrical tripartite tower crowned by a small pavilion resembling a reliquary box. A large cartouche crowns the central parapet. Among the notable decorative features are the pointed-arched plaque to the left of the entrance, shields with Tudor roses, doors with metal hinges, etc. An early neon sign remains on the roof. (photo 1)

Tudor City Place, west side between East 41st Street and East 43rd Street. This side of the street contains the two Tudor City Parks which have always been an integral part of the complex. The parks have been relandscaped several times since they were built. They are slightly smaller than originally, since Tudor City Place has been widened. Although not the original landscaping, they are an important contributing feature to the historic district. There is an original metal lamp in the north park. (photo 6)

8. Significance

Period prehistoric 1400–1499 1500–1599 1600–1699 1700–1799 1800–1899 1900–	Areas of Significance—C archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic agricultureX architecture art commerce communications	heck and justify below X community planning conservation economics education engineering exploration/settlement industry invention	landscape architecture law literature military music philosophy politics/government	e religion science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation other (specify)
Specific dates	1925-1930	Builder/Architect H. Do	ouglas Tyes, Chief Ar	rchitect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Tudor City Historic District is historically significant as one of the first, largest, and most important examples of a planned middle-class residential community in New York City. Architecturally, the Tudor City complex contains exceptionally finely detailed examples of Tudor inspired multi-family housing. The layout of the complex, with its buildings of various heights set around private landscaped parks, had a widespread influence on later apartment projects. The district is primarily composed of a unified complex of apartment buildings, hotels, and private parks dating from between 1925 and 1930 planned and developed by the Fred F. French Company as a residential city, physically set apart from the noise and tumult of its surroundings. The French project was unified by a carefully laid out plan and by the applique of a cohesive architectural vocabulary to the facades of almost all of the buildings. The buildings were designed with sixteenth-century English Tudor and Elizabethan inspired forms. In early twentieth century America, these English architectural motifs had come to symbolize the comforts of suburban living. Tudor City was conceived as an urban response to the suburban flight of the middle class and was, therefore, designed with the open spaces and homey and familiar architectural forms expected in a suburban development. The Tudor ornament used on the Tudor City buildings is far more sophisticated than that found on contemporary apartment houses. Some of the decorative features were modeled on specific English Tudor buildings while other ornament is more generic. The complex also includes a 1925 apartment building with modest Tudor detailing that slightly preceded French's development and may have inspired its style, an 1871 church that was rebuilt in the Tudor style to harmonize with the complex, and a 1930 hotel that was part of the French development but which differs somewhat in style. Tudor City was the largest apartment complex in Midtown and the first major attempt to build affordable middle-class housing adjacent to New York's business center. Tudor City was also part of a larger post World War I movement which sought to reclaim the slums of the far east side of Midtown and convert the old rundown neighborhood into a prosperous residential adjunct to the growing commercial center near Grand Central Terminal. This seminal development retains its architectural integrity to an extremely high degree. Three buildings underwent minor alterations in the early 1950s when East 42nd Street was realigned. These changes to the lower stories of Woodstock Tower, the Hotel Tudor, and the Church of the Covenant respect the original design, are complementary in style, and are almost imperceptible today.

Tudor City is located on Prospect Hill, a substantial bluff overlooking the East River waterfront. The area was first developed following the Civil War when the streets between First and Second avenues were largely built up with brownstone-fronted row houses erected for the middle class. Development of single-family houses in the Tudor City area peaked in 1870. At this time, Prospect Place (now Tudor City Place) was laid out. Four Italianate style row houses survive within the boundaries of the district (non-contributing elements). Also within the district is a church erected to minister to the new middle-class population—the Presbyterian Church of the Covenant (1871), an early work of architect J.C. Cady. In the late nineteenth century, the

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

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neighborhood began to change as the old homeowners moved to newly developing areas; the row houses were either converted into rooming houses or replaced by tenements. By 1900, the east Midtown area, from 42nd Street to 59th Street, had become a multi-ethnic slum.

With the exception of tenement construction, there was almost no new building in the area east of Third Avenue prior to World War I. However, dramatic changes were occurring just to the west and these changes were to have a profound influence on the old residential blocks near the East River. The construction of a new Grand Central Terminal (1903-1913) on 42nd Street and Park Avenue was to be the catalyst for the transformation of Midtown. Following the completion of Grand Central Terminal and the end of World War I, great corporate office towers, luxurious hotels, and exclusive apartment buildings appeared on Madison, Park, and Lexington avenues in Midtown. It was inevitable that this sharp increase in construction and land values would spill over into the rundown streets to the east. The revitalization of the east Midtown area was initiated by some of New York's wealthiest citizens, but within a few years both extremely affluent people and those of more modest means were moving into this renewed neighborhood.

In the years after World War I, many people began to leave Manhattan, seeking homes in the quiet suburban areas surrounding the island. Prior to 1920, there were few residential alternatives for the urbanite who could not afford to maintain a single-family house in an established neighborhood, did not wish to live in a converted row house or urban apartment building, and did not wish to move to the suburbs. One possible alternative for such a person was to purchase an old brownstone home in one of the city's less desirable areas. In the second decade of the twentieth century a movement began to redesign the old row houses with stylish new fronts. It was this development which initiated the changes in east Midtown that were to result in the metamorphosis of the slum blocks into a prosperous residential community. The transformation of east Midtown began with the Turtle Bay and Sutton Place projects. Turtle Bay involved the conversion of twenty old brownstone row houses on East 48th and East 49th streets between Second and Third avenues into a unified modern complex with landscaped rear gardens (Turtle Bay Historic District, NR listed, 7-21-83). At Sutton Place, seventeen old brownstone buildings were converted into stylish new homes with a common rear garden (Sutton Place Historic District, NR listed, 9-12-85). These two developments, the later construction of adjacent apartment houses, and the redesign of Beekman Place attracted members of New York's wealthiest families and dramatically altered the character of much of the area east of Third Avenue.

These new developments had little effect on the exodus of Manhattan's middle-class population. There was a fear in the 1920s that New York's housing problems would lead to a city without a middle class. In 1926, Architectural Forum commented:

To lose the most valuable class of its citizens, through not providing adequate houses for them, leaves the city in the unbalanced possession of the very rich and the very poor—not a satisfactory civic condition. 1

Fred F. French's Tudor City, announced in a publicity release on December 18, 1925, was

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the first major project which addressed the housing needs of Manhattan's middle class.

Fred F. French (1883-1936), a poor boy from the Bronx, became one of the largest and most successful developers of residential properties in New York's history. French's career had a particularly meteoric rise after World War I, when he erected some of the finest multiple dwellings in the city and initiated a clever means of financing, known as the French Plan. Under the French Plan, each building erected by the Fred F. French Co. was financed as a separate corporation with stock sold to the public and profits shared by the company and the stockholders. The Fred F. French Co. and its subsidiaries, the Fred F. French Investing Co. and the Fred F. French Management Co., took responsibility for all aspects of a building's planning and construction. After acquiring a site for new construction, the Fred F. French Investing Co. established and underwrote a separate owning corporation and sold stock in that company. The Fred F. French Co. prepared architectural plans using its own architectural staff and took responsibility for all aspects of the construction work. The Fred F. French Management Co. then prepared renting plans and began leasing the building. This company also managed the completed structure.

The site where Tudor City rose was not one that immediately recommended itself as one for "a complete high class community." The blocks between 40th and 43rd streets and First and Second avenues were lined with old row houses and tenements. Set above First Avenue, Prospect Hill overlooked unsightly slaughter houses, coal yards, and a large Con Edison generating plant. Not only were the views unappealing, but the smells emanating from the abattoirs must have been potent. By 1925, however, the redevelopment of east Midtown was well underway and the location of Prospect Hill, close to Grand Central Terminal, was too advantageous for the site to remain in its rundown state.

Just prior to the inception of the Fred F. French project, Prospect Hill had been the location of a few new buildings, notably the thirty-six family Prospect Hill Apartments, designed and constructed in 1925 by the Toensfeldt-Boughton Co., architects and engineers. This building is located at 327-35 East 41st Street. The six-story cooperative is a simple brick structure with a Tudor-inspired entrance consisting of a limestone pointed-arched entrance ensemble detailed with shields, drip lintels, and pelicans. The construction of this building is said to have played a role in French's decision to build his complex on Prospect Hill.³

The year 1925 was an opportune one for building new homes within walking distance from the Midtown business district. The economy was booming and many new office towers were rising near Grand Central. Various stories exist as to who first suggested the idea of building on Prospect Hill.⁴ It appears that the first to actively pursue the concept was realtor Leonard S. Gans, who "had one very definate idea, namely, that New York must provide homes within walking distance of the midtown business section to relieve to some extent the terrific overcrowding of north and south transportation facilities." Gans showed Prospect Hill to several builders, but none was interested until Paine Edson of the Fred F. French Co. visited the area. Edson is reported to have brought French to see the site. French was, according to Edson, unimpressed at first; "Look at those slaughter houses and smoke stacks and the rookeries around them and think of the fumes! Phew!," he is reported to have exclaimed. Edson urged French to look to the west towards

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Grand Central and its surrounding skyscrapers and he also pointed out the cooperative rising on 41st Street, noting "that the building had been rented from plans." French was convinced and he had Gans buy up the property, keeping the owner's name a secret. With the site assembled by December 1925, French was able to announce his plan for a city of apartment houses and apartment hotels to be known as Tudor City.

Fred F. French planned Tudor City as a complex of apartment houses and residence hotels that would be so convenient, well-planned, well-built, and well-priced that middle-class families and single people would be more attracted to these Manhattan buildings than to houses or apartments in the outer boroughs or the suburbs. The chief asset of the Prospect Hill site was its location within a four minute walk of the Grand Central area's office buildings and its convenience, as well, to the shops, hotels, and theaters of Midtown. French sought to attract residents to his new community by accenting the fact that it was "within a few minutes' walk of the business center of the greatest city in the world."8 French and those who wrote about Tudor City stressed the fact that the community's residents would not have to suffer through New York's heavy traffic, nor would they need to endure the ignominy of riding the subways or commuter rail lines on a daily basis. In February 1927, The Voice, the newspaper of the Fred F. French Companies, noted that "unbearable subway, railroad and streetcar conditions, wasted hours and injured health will be escaped from if you decide to live [in Tudor City]."9 French's 1929 rental brochure was quite explicit, bragging that Tudor City residents would live "a 26-hour day" since they would not have to waste two hours commuting. 10 The prospectus reads:

Why not get up at a civilized hour in Tudor City, breakfast at leisure, walk to business and arrive at par? At the close of the day one could be home in ten minutes, rest and read until dinner time, after which there is a long evening ahead. That is life. 11

The idea of creating housing within walking distance of work had motivated much of the redevelopment of east Midtown, but Tudor City was the first large-scale project to put the idea into practice. The success of Tudor City influenced the rebuilding of other depressed areas of Midtown. In 1928, the Beaux-Arts Apartments, two large buildings laid out exclusively with studios, rose immediately to the north of Tudor City on East 44th Street. Other apartment buildings, both luxurious and more modest ones, followed in the area between 42nd and 59th streets. In the 1940s, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company emulated Fred F. French, financing and building the middle-class Stuyvesant Town and Peter Cooper Village complexes between 14th and 23rd streets at First Avenue. Similarly, such 1970s projects as East Midtown Plaza and Manhattan Plaza sought to create decent housing in convenient, but rundown areas.

Although Tudor City's location was accessible to Midtown, the complex has always been separate from the commercial district. From the beginning, French planned to build "a city within a city," 12 "a hushed, isolated city at the center of New York." 13 Tudor City was to be near the bustle of Midtown, but physically and visually apart. The elevated Prospect Hill site permitted the construction of a residential city removed from its immediate surroundings. An extraordinary sense of quiet pervades Tudor City because

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there are no through streets in the complex. Due to its siting on a high bluff with almost no vehicular traffic, Tudor City has the quality of a secluded community. This atmosphere is heightened by the use of Tudor architectural forms and by the presence of two sizable private parks.

From the time of Fred F. French's initial announcement of his intention to build a new residential community on Prospect Hill, the development was referred to as Tudor City. It is clear that from the start French planned to erect a series of high-rise residential buildings designed with English Tudor ornamentation. French was not the first to use English sixteenth-century decorative features on apartment buildings, but he carried this architectural trend to new heights of quality and sophistication.

In the first decades of the twentieth century the English cottage and country house became one of the major design sources for suburban dwellings. This English form became so common in America's suburban communities that the style became a major symbol of the suburban home and of the suburban lifestyle. As Architectural Forum contributor Julius Gregory wrote in his 1926 discussion of suburban dwellings in the English Cottage style, "no other type of architecture can equal it in its quality of charm and what we may call 'livableness.'" This style was so closely associated with suburban living that many apartment buildings erected in suburban towns were designed with pointed-arched entrances, picturesque gables and chimneys, half timbering, and other stock Tudor forms. The Scarsdale Apartments (Schultze & Weaver, pre-1925) and Scarswold Apartments (Townsend, Steinle & Haskell, 1925) in Scarsdale, the Alger Court Apartments (Bates & Howard) in Bronxville, and the Blind Brook Lodge (Van West & Wein, 1925) in Rye are major examples of this form in nearby Westchester County, New York; similar forms exist in suburbs elsewhere in America.

By the time Tudor City was designed, the Neo-Tudor style had already been used on a limited number of urban apartment buildings, including several erected by the Fred F. French Companies. Tudor City surpassed these efforts at creating suburban apartment buildings in an urban setting both in its use of the Tudor architectural vocabulary and in the scale of its design and plan. The Tudor forms found on eleven of the twelve original Tudor City buildings are far more sophisticated than that on earlier Neo-Tador apartment buildings. An analysis of the ornament in stone, terra cotta, iron, wood, and glass shows an in-depth knowledge of Tudor ornament and symbolic Tudor emblems. The architects and designers of Tudor City, led by chief architect H. Douglas Ives, used a broad range of sixteenth-century English detail ranging from generic Tudor forms to features modeled on a specific precedent, such as the decorative terra-cotta piers of the Manor (333 East 43rd Stree), which were inspired by the terracotta buttresses of Sutton Place, Surry, a manor house built between 1520 and 1530. The stone, terra cotta, woodwork, ironwork, and glass used by the Fred F. French Companies in the 1920s were of the highest quality and most of the ornamental work remains in extremely fine condition. Although the buildings are unified by the consistent use of Tudor detail, there is a significant amount of variety since no two buildings have the same decoration. The complex has a much livelier and far more distinguished effect than many other Tudor apartment buildings.

The sense of tranquility and the extensive use of Tudor ornament are not the only

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features that give the district its suburban character. The siting of the buildings around two large central parks is crucial to the creation of Tudor City's special character. It is the open space provided by these parks, combined with the development's location above the surrounding streets, that lends the community its suburban air. Thus, it is surprising that the parks do not appear to have been a part of French's original scheme. As demolition work got underway on Prospect Hill, The Voice reported that "the antiquated buildings now occupying the site are being torn down. We also plan to develop the rest of our property and to plant the area in lawn pending its use for later buildings."15 Two months later The Voice wrote, "some time later, after the buildings on 43rd Street and 41st Street and the two blocks on Prospect Place [now Tudor City Place] have been fully rented, these parks will be developed into possible forty-story hotels."16 However, French soon realized the folly of planning construction on the parks and they became the permanent centerpiece of the new city, "bring[ing] the Country to the Center of New York." 17 As early as April 1927, an article in The Voice compared the foresight of French with that of Samuel B. Ruggles, who planned Gramercy Park. 18 The two Tudor City parks, encompassing approximately 64,000 square feet, followed the precedent of Gramercy Park, in that private land was set aside as open space and only residents were to be issued keys for entry to the parks. The north park was the first to be landscaped. 19 As might be expected, it was laid out in the English manner with a picturesque gate house, serpentine walks, lawns, trees, flower beds, and a fountain. In September 1927, the Fred F. French Company announced that the south park was to be laid out as an eighteen-hole golf course. The golf course was probably planned as an advertising ploy and in the 1930s it was replaced by a more traditional park.

By early 1927, the parks had become fixed features of Tudor City and are discussed in all of French's advertising and public relations material. The parks are the focal point of Tudor City and, although they have been relandscaped, they remain one of the most important features of the development.

The Fred F. French Company's plan to build a large centrally located community for the middle class was unprecedented. Never before had any developer succeeded in erecting a middle-class housing development within walking distance of the urban center. As has been noted, Tudor City was planned as a response to the exodus of middle-class people to the suburbs. The success of French's idea for a middle-class community was based on the modest cost of assembling the large site and on French's ability to purchase in bulk the materials he needed for the construction of this large complex.

The 1929 Tudor City prospectus makes clear for whom Tudor City was planned. It states that:

The whole scheme has been studied with infinate care, planned not for millionaires but for people of taste who wish to spend carefully. It is for those who want to live close to the center of everything, free from the transportation problem and yet not be forced to pay rent based on the soaring values that make most of the desirable parts of the smart East Side prohibitive.

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W. Parker Chase's New York: The Wonder City was even more explicit, boldly stating that Tudor City is for "the better type of the 'middle classes.'"21

The Fred F. French Companies hoped to attract a wide range of middle-class residents to Tudor City and planned the buildings with the needs of both single people and families in mind. The three large towers on Tudor City Place (Prospect Tower, Tudor Tower, and Windsor Tower), Woodstock Tower, and Hatfield House were planned as apartment hotels with one, two, and three room suites. It was thought that these buildings would attract bachelors, single working women, and young married couples without children. Each of the suites contained a bath and serving pantry, but there were no kitchens. Many of the small rooms had built-in Murphy or closet beds (many of these survive today).

The Manor, the Hermitage, the Cloister, Essex House, Haddon Hall, and Hardwicke Hall were all built as traditional housekeeping units ranging in size from studios to six rooms. It was projected that these buildings would attract a mix of single people and families. The Hotel Tudor was the only Tudor City building that was not to be for permanent residence; it was built as a transient hotel with its entrance on 42nd Street just east of Second Avenue.

Tudor City was not simply an apartment complex set apart from its surroundings. It was planned to be a complete self-contained city with shops, offices, and services that would cater specifically to the residents. Tudor City's original shops included three restaurants, a grocery store, a liquor store, a drug store, a barber shop, a beauty parlor, and a post office. There were also indoor and outdoor playgrounds, a private nursery, a radio engineer who would repair and connect aerials, maids, laundry and valet service, private guards, a garage, and a furniture repair and rug cleaning service.

The success of Tudor City can be measured by the level of its rentals. The two initial units constructed, Prospect Tower and the Manor, were partially leased even before their completion and by November 1927, one month after they were finished, the buildings were approximately ninety percent rented. All of the buildings rented rapidly and their have been few vacancies since. Even during the Depression, Tudor City remained popular, its low rents and amenities attracting tenants.

Soon after the idea for the creation of Tudor City was announced, work began on clearing the site and erecting the buildings. Tudor City was New York's first privately financed slum clearance project and, like most later projects, both public and private, it had the unfortunate side effect of displacing many people. It is not known where the residents of the old row houses and tenements moved. French's original plan entailed erecting buildings on a horseshoe-shaped plan with tall residential hotels at the base of the horseshoe (Tudor City Place) and shorter apartment houses on East 41st Street and East 43rd Street. The apartment hotels were to face towards the west away from the slaughter houses and other eyesores along the East River. Although the French interests had acquired over one hundred houses in late 1925, they did not yet have title to all of the property in the proposed development. The Fred F. French Company continued to purchase land and by 1927 had expanded its interests to 42nd

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Street. Several owners refused to sell and plans for certain sites had to be revised or delayed.

The first building erected at Tudor City was Prospect Tower, on the east side of Tudor City Place between 42nd and 43rd streets. This 22-story apartment hotel was begun in 1926 and opened for occupancy on October 1, 1927. The second Tudor City unit was the ten-story Manor at 333 East 43rd Street. It opened at the same time as Prospect Tower. As has been noted, each of the Tudor City buildings was financed by a separate stock offering. Each building was a separate corporation named for its unit number in the development (Prospect Tower, for example, was Tudor City First Unit, Inc.). Following Prospect Tower and the Manor were Tudor Tower (Fourth Unit, 1926—there is no Third Unit), the Cloister (Fifth Unit, 1927), the Hermitage (Sixth Unit, 1928), the combined Haddon Hall, Hardwicke Hall, and Hatfield House (Eighth Unit, 1928), Woodstock Tower (Seventh Unit, 1928—begun after construction began on the Eighth Unit), Essex House (Tenth Unit, 1929), Windsor Tower (Ninth Unit, 1930), and the Hotel Tudor (Eleventh Unit, 1930).

The large number of apartment hotels in the Tudor City development was explained by French's architect, H.D. Ives, as a response to the needs of "those of more moderate means,...to whom ease of living and accessibility are of prime importance."²³ These residential hotels were portrayed as an answer to a pressing need for small, moderately priced but carefully laid out apartments and, indeed, they did rent rapidly. In reality, however, builders erected som many of these units because their height was not as severely limited by zoning laws as the height of apartment buildings and, since the apartment hotel suites were not permitted to have kitchens, the buildings did not have to include the fire protection features mandated for housekeeping units in the Tenement House Law.

The construction of Tudor City had a significant impact on its immediate surroundings. The presence of Tudor City caused an enormous increase in land values throughout the area. In 1928, the New York Times remarked that "values have skyrocketed throughout the Sutton Place, Mitchell Place and Tudor City district." By World War II, many large-scale apartment houses and apartment hotels had appeared in east Midtown and the area was again considered one of the most desirable in New York. The presence of Tudor City also influenced the Church of the Covenant. In 1927, two years after construction began on Tudor City and just as the first building were being occupied, the church decided to build an extension which would cater to the needs of the area's new middle-class residents. Architects Meyer & Mathieu were commissioned to build a church house for social and recreational activities. This work, which replaced several bays of the original building, was designed in a Neo-Tudor style to match the design of the Tudor City buildings.

Major changes occurred in the Tudor City vicinity following the 1948 announcement that the land between First Avenue and the East River was to be the home of the United Nations. As part of the improvement to the approaches to the United Nations site, alterations were planned to 42nd Street and Prospect Place. Under the guidance of Robert Moses, 42nd Street was to be widened and the narrow tunnel through which traffic moved under Prospect Place was to be removed, as were the service roads leading

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up from 42nd Street. In place of the private Prospect Place, a wider public street, renamed Tudor City Place, was to be laid out, crossing 42nd Street on a new ornamental bridge. The entrances to the buildings fronting on the 42nd Street service ramp would have to be remodelled. Stairways were planned to connect Tudor City with 42nd Street and two public parks (not within the historic district) were to be laid out on sites adjoining the private Tudor City parks. This plan had many positive features, including the removal of the narrow tunnel which choked traffic heading to and from First Avenue and the creation of the public parks. However, the plan also left Woodstock Tower, the Church of the Covenant, and the Hotel Tudor without entrances. The removal cf the south service road left the church entrance eight feet above the new sidewalk. The entrance to Woodstock Tower had to be lowered nineteen feet. The three buildings on the south side of East 42nd Street filed damage suits against the city and in 1952 Woodstock Tower was awarded \$405,000, the church was awarded \$90,000, and the Hotel Tudor received \$100,535. Each of these buildings has a 42nd Street entrance built in 1950-52, but all of this work was undertaken with great respect for the original designs. The improvements associated with the United Nations construction also entailed the redesign of the Tudor City Parks under the supervision of landscaper J.J. Levison. Although slightly smaller than the original parks (due to the widening of Prospect Place), the redesigned Tudor City parks retain the suburban atmosphere of their predecessors. The original idea of private landscaped open spaces to be used for relaxation and recreation by the residents of Tudor City endures. Very little has changed visually at Tudor City since the early 1950s, despite the fact that the Fred F. French Company sold the property in about 1970.

Footnotes

¹Ed Rush Duer, "The Skyscraper in New York," <u>Architectural Forum</u> 44(February 1926) 107.

New York Times, December 18, 1925, p.1.

³William John Drede, <u>Skyline Builders</u> (NY: Early Brothers, 1947), p.37.

The story printed in <u>Skyline Builders</u> in 1947 differs somewhat from that reported in the <u>New York Times</u> on December 27, 1925, X, p.1. The account in <u>Skyline Builders</u>, related by Paine Edson, gives him more credit that does the New York Times.

New York Times, December 27, 1925, X, p.1.

⁶Drede, p.36.

⁷Ibid, p.37.

 $^{^{8}}$ Tudor City prospectus, 1929, cover; Tudor City prospectus, 1939, title page.

The Voice 1(February 1927) 1.

¹⁰ Prospectus, 1929, p.5.

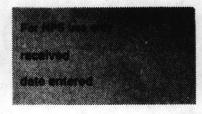
¹¹ Ibid.

¹²Ibid, p.3.

^{13&}lt;sub>The Voice</sub> 1(December 1926)1.

Julius Gregory, "On the Charm and Character of the English Cottage," <u>Architectural</u> <u>Forum</u> 44(March 1926) 147.

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¹⁵_The Voice 1(July 1926)1.

¹⁶ Ibid. 1 (September 1926)1.

¹⁷ Prospectus, 1929, p.7.

¹⁸ The Voice 1(April 1927)3

Sheffield A, Arnold appears to have been the landscape architect.

^{20&}lt;sub>Prospectus</sub>, 1929, p.11.

²¹ W. Parker Chase, New York: The Wonder City (NY: Wonder City Publishing Co., 1932), p.271.

New York Times, November 20, 1927, XIII, p.18.

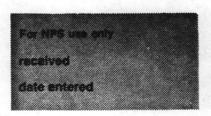
²³ The Voice 4(March 1930)3.

²⁴ New York Times, June 24, 1928, XI, p.1.

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January 14, 1926, VIII, p.3; September 5, 1926, X, p.1; June 26, 1927, XI, p.2; July 24, 1927, X, p.2; September 25, 1927, XI, p.23; October 7, 1926, p.1; March 4, 1928, XII, p.2; June 24, 1928, XI, p.1; February 26, 1929, p.49; August 31, 1936, p.1; September 6, 1936, XI, p.1; June 22, 1945, p.27; July 22, 1948, p.17; December 22, 1949, p.1; December 17, 1950, p.36; October 7, 1951, p.1; March 21, 1952, p.25; March 28, 1952, p.4; April 16, 1952, p.33; June 19, 1952, p.39; July 30, 1958, p.29.

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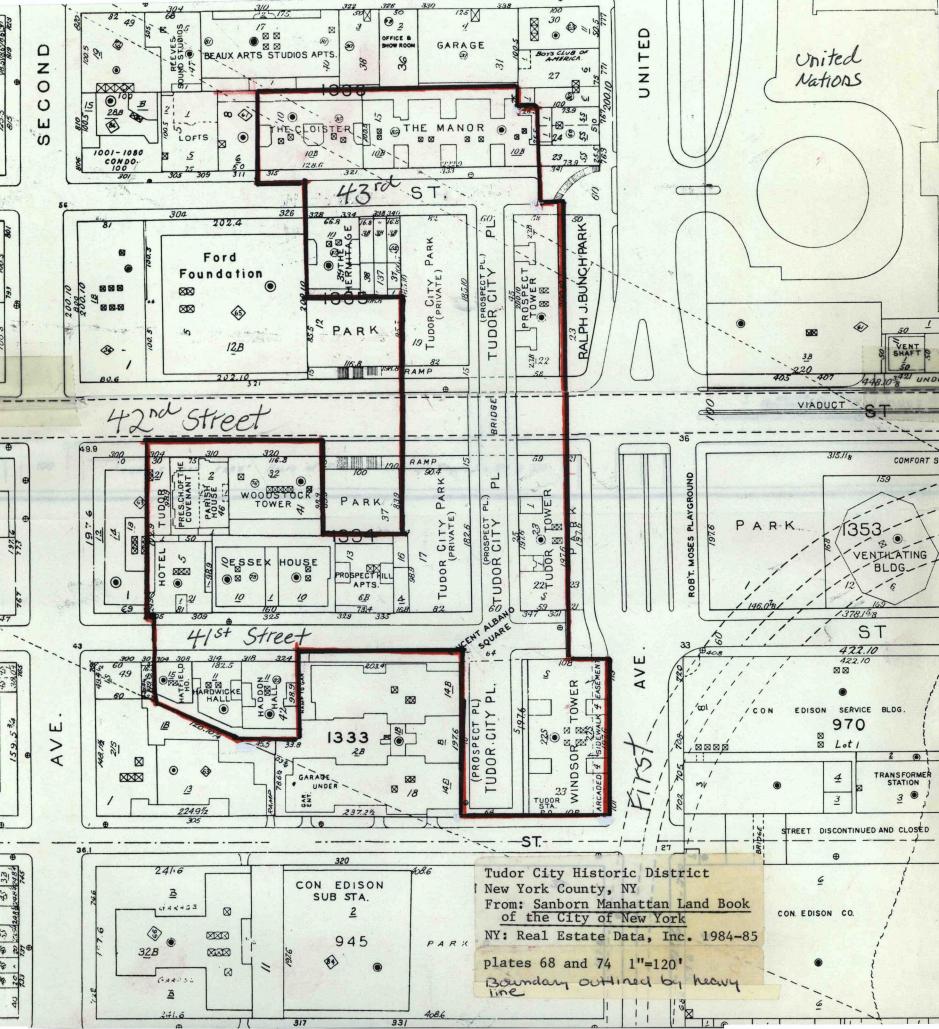
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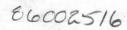
Report researched and written by:

Andrew Scott Dolkart, Consultant 201 West 92nd Street--3F New York, NY 10025 (212)-877-2088



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Photo Intrusion II-IV
Tudor City H.D.
New York County, NY
336, 338, 340 East 43rd Street (reading from right to left), view from the northeast
Photo: Anne'Lowenstein 7/86
Neg: A. Lowenstein 333 E. 41st St. NYC



Photo Intrusion I
Tudor City H.D.
New York County, NY

337 East 41st Street, view from the

southeast

Photo: Anne Lowenstein 7/86

Neg: A. Lowenstein 333 E. 41st St. NYC



Photo 1
Tudor City H.D.
New York County, NY
View north on Tudor City Place
towards The Manor; Prospect
Tower to right
Photo: Andrew S. Dolkart 7/85
Neg: NY Landmarks Conservancy
330 W. 42nd St. NYC



Photo 2
Tudor City H.D.
New York County, NY
View looking southwest along East
41st Street with (from 1eft to
right) Haddon Hall, Hardwicke
Hall, and Hatfield House
Photo: Andrew S. Dolkart 7/85
Neg: NY Landmarks Conservancy
330 W. 42nd St. NYC



Photo 3
Tudor City H.D.
New York County, NY
View looking northwest along East
41st Street with (from right to
left)Prospect Hill Apartments,
Eassex House, and Hotel Tudor (rear)

Photo: Anne Lowenstein 7/86

Neg: A. Lowenstein 333 E. 41st St. NYC



Photo 4
Tudor City H.D.
New York County, NY
Tudor Tower (25 Tudor City Place),
view from the northwest
Photo: Appel Levenstein 7/86

Photo: Anne Lowenstein 7/86

Neg: A. Lowenstein 333 E. 41st St. NYC



Photo 5
Tudor City H.D.
New York County, NY
Tudor Tower (25 Tudor City Place)
stained-glass detail
Photo: Anne Lowenstein 7/86
Neg: A. Lowenstein 333 E. 41st St. NYC



Photo 6
Tudor City H.D.
New York County, NY
Tudor City North Park, view from
the northwest

Photo: Anne Lowenstein 7/86

Neg: A. Lowenstein 333 E. 41st St. NYC

HOTEL TUDOR







Photo 7
Tudor City H.D.
New York County, NY
Hotel Tudor, lower floors (304 East 42nd Street), view from the north
Photo: Anne Lowenstein 7/86
Neg: A. Lowenstein 333 East 41st St. NYC

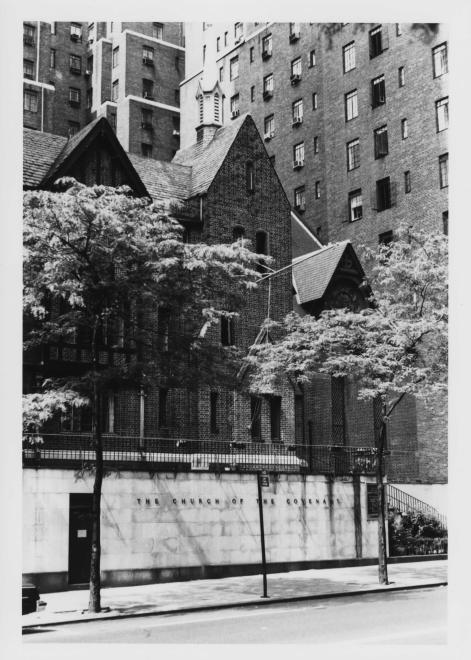


Photo 8
Tudor City H.D.
New York County, NY
Presbyterian Church of the Covenant
(310 East 42nd Street), view from
the northeast
Photo: Anne Lowenstein 7/86
Neg: A. Lowenstein 333 E. 41st St. NYC



Photo 9 Tudor City H.D.

New York County, N.Y.

View looking northeast along East 43rd Street with (from left to right) The

Cloister and The Manor

Photo: Anne Lowenstein 7/86

Neg: A. Lowenstein 333 E. 41st St. NYC