

12th Ward Bank Building

Individual Landmark

145 East 125th Street



12th Ward Bank Building. Photo: Lorraine Colbert

The 12th Ward Bank Building was constructed in 1893, and was designed by architect George S. Drew Jr. It is a six-story commercial building with storefronts on the first floor that wrap from the west elevation on Lexington Avenue to the south elevation on 125th Street. The building's entrance is on the east end of the lot on the south elevation.

The 12th Ward Bank was the 12th largest bank in the United States as of 1989 and was a result of a merger between Excelsior Savings Bank and Empire City Savings Bank in 1967. The bank had 125 branches across the states of New York, California, Florida, Michigan, and Texas.

The 12th Ward Bank Building's tan brick exterior is exposed on the western and southern facades with brown stone elements around the building entry, windows, and cornices. The building's glass door transom entry on the southern elevation is topped with a large, mildly recessed Roman arch made of brown stone. This brown stone is also used to mark the building's construction period from 1886-94 above the entry lintel. It is also used on the window lintels which begin on the second floor as bare horizontal faces up to the fifth floor, and merge in minimally decorative groups centered on the sixth floor. The windows to either

side of this have double recessed arched lintels made of tan brick. The building has a fire escape that climbs the center of the west elevation and leads up above a simple cornice that remains intact and wraps around the building's exterior.