

## **Nicholas C. and Agnes Benziger House**

Individual Landmark

345 Edgecombe Avenue

Designation Date: January 12, 1999



Nicholas C. and Agnes Benziger House, c. 1915

Source: photographer unknown, collection Nanette De Schaunensee, courtesy Michael Henry Adams

The Nicholas C. and Agnes Benziger House is one of Harlem's last remaining freestanding mansions. Benziger, a Swiss emigre, was a successful publisher, manufacturer, and importer of books used in Catholic worship.

Designed by William Schickel, a prominent German-born architect, the house was built in 1890-91, when many picturesque villas were constructed along the eastern ridge of lower Washington Heights, overlooking the Bronx and the Harlem plain. The building's eclectic style incorporates mostly medieval forms inspired by central European sources. Among the design's most notable features are the flared mansard roof, pierced by numerous gabled dormers, and the facade's richly colored iron spot brickwork.

In 1920, Dr. Henry W. Lloyd converted the house into a hospital. After World War II, a nursery school occupied the building, and later, it was used as a hotel. Since 1989, it has been owned by the Broadway Housing Development Fund Company, a nonprofit organization providing permanent housing for formerly homeless adults. Despite some alterations and additions to the exterior over the past century, much of the original historic fabric and landscape surrounding the house remains intact.

[Read the full NYC LPC designation report here.](#)