

Roger H. Bullard

Roger Harrington Bullard was raised in New York City, with an education in both public and private grade schools. Perhaps an early indication of his talent, he was awarded a first place certificate in 1897 from the Flushing Institute in drawing and penmanship. After attending Flushing High School, he graduated from the Columbia University School of Architecture in 1907. Bullard accepted a position in 1908 of 'Architect Auxiliar' in the Orbas Publicas Construcciones Civiles to advise the Cuban government on the design of municipal buildings like courthouses, customs houses, and schools being erected on the island. After a yearlong period in the Caribbean, Bullard was hired as an associate in the firm of Grosvenor Atterbury where he was able to hone his skills under the tutelage of their senior architects. While in that office, he participated in the design of the Forest Hills Gardens development in Queens.

After six years in Atterbury's firm, Bullard formed a partnership with Philip H. Goodwin and Heathcote M. Woolsey--both fellow Columbia alumni--to form the practice of Goodwin, Bullard & Woolsey in 1917 at 4 East 39th Street in New York City. The firm of Goodwin, Bullard & Woolsey used their contacts to land commissions from well-connected individuals. While at Columbia, Bullard was a member of St. Anthony's Fraternity where he would end up meeting future clients. As Bullard's wife was a niece of the first wife of J.P. Morgan, that access to social capital probably kickstarted the firm with the design in 1917 of the "Apple Trees" estate in Matinecock for Junius Spencer Morgan. Not shortly thereafter, Paul G. Pennoyer--another relative of the Morgan family--hired them to design his estate, "Round Bush", which was also located in Matinecock. In 1918, they were called to design "Two Maple Farm" in Old Westbury for Malcolm Stevenson, Sr.

By 1920, the partnership had dissolved and Bullard formed a solo architectural practice at 15 West 38th Street in Manhattan (later 331 Madison Avenue). He came to be known for designing country houses and country clubs for the affluent. While his work was varied, he probably first started out as an independent architect with small residential commissions throughout New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey. Looking back to roots in the upscale Flushing community of Queens, he designed several homes there.

Bullard's major country house works on Long Island included "Rynwood" in Old Brookville for Samuel A. Salvage, "Salutation" in Glen Cove for Junius S. Morgan, and "The Hameau" in Brookville for Henry Upham Harris, Sr. Concurrently to Bullard's own estate, he designed "Enderby" for Edward Jordan Dimock and the residence of William Everdell, Jr. who became his immediate neighbors on Shelter Rock Road. He also designed alterations to "Maple Knoll" in Lattingtown for Henry S. Morgan, Sr. Outside of Long Island, he designed the "Bella Vista" estate in Fairfield, Connecticut for Hugh D. Auchincloss and the York Harbor Shops in Maine. Bullard was also known for designing the clubhouses for the Maidstone Club and Oakland Golf Club in New York and the Plainfield Country Club in New Jersey.

One of Bullard's most famous designs was a model home in 1934 for the organizers of Better Homes in America which allied with the Federal government to organize demonstration houses in cities across the country. He collaborated with Clifford C. Wendehack to create a traditional single-family dwelling for New York Committee of Better Homes in America which could show the

virtues of homeownership and self-improvement amidst the backdrop of the Great Depression. Landscape architect, Annette Hoyt Flanders, designed a play yard and garden. Constructed on a plot donated on the corner of 39th Street and Park Avenue, this Colonial Revival structure with a white picket fence stood out fantastically against a backdrop of skyscrapers and glass of Midtown Manhattan. This spectacle gained national attention with thousands of visitors and widespread publicity.

Toward the end of his life, Bullard opted to work alongside other practitioners as associated architects: He designed 400 East 57th Street in New York City with Kenneth M. Franzheim, the Kent School Chapel with Shreve, Lamb & Harmon in Connecticut, and the Milwaukee Country Club with Fitzhugh Scott in Wisconsin. As the onset of the Great Depression changed the era of building extravagant estate homes for the wealthy, Bullard was forced to accept contracts for institutional designs for the Works Progress Administration. It was during this period that Bullard collaborated with the firm of Tooker & Marsh as associate architect for Manhasset Senior High School and the Floral Park Post Office. One of his last works was designing alterations to Christ Episcopal Church in Manhasset to accommodate the installation of a 13th century window donated by Payne Whitney from St. Germain des Pres in France.

Throughout his life, Bullard's designs received considerable critical acclaim among the press and his peers. He received an honorable mention from the American Institute of Architects in 1931 for an apartment house in Manhattan, a New York Architectural League award, and a distinguished AIA Gold Medal award for his small house design in the "Better Homes in America" competition. Outside of the office, Bullard was a member of the Beaux Arts Institute of Design, New York Society of Architects, Architectural League of New York, Delta Psi Fraternity, and the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects. He served as a trustee of the Village of North Hills and the Bureau of Architectural Relations. Bullard passed away in March of 1935.

Through the effort of Phil Esser, Bullard's extensive papers fortunately survive within the Warren Arthur Architectural Archives at the Ridgefield Historical Society in Connecticut.

Compiled by Andrew Cronson for the Manhasset Historical Society | mhsny.org

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