

The Campbell Apartment (“cocktails from another era”) is a cocktail lounge located in Grand Central Terminal. The space was originally the office and private salon of American financier and railroad tycoon John W. Campbell. The breathtaking interior features intricate architectural details and craftsmanship, including extensive woodwork, a decorative beamed ceiling, an immense leaded glass exterior window, and a massive stone fireplace.

The space was first leased by Campbell from Cornelius Vanderbilt, owner of Grand Central, in 1923. It was a single room 60 feet long by 30 feet wide with a 25-foot ceiling and an enormous fireplace in which Campbell kept a steel safe. He commissioned Augustus N. Allen, an architect known for designing estates on the north shore of Long Island, to build an office, transforming the space into a 13th-century Florentine palace with a hand-painted timbered ceiling and leaded windows.

Campbell added a piano and pipe organ, and at night turned his office into a reception hall, entertaining 50 or 60 friends who came to hear famous musicians play private recitals.

After Campbell’s death in 1957, the furnishings disappeared from his office and the space eventually became a signalman’s office and later a closet at Grand Central, where the transit police stored guns and other equipment. It also became a small jail.

After falling into disrepair, the space was restored and renovated in 1999 as the Campbell Apartment. The walls and ceiling were brought back to their former glory and the original steel safe, once hidden behind a wall, now sits in the massive fireplace.

