

# MAYOR'S HOUSE IS HALLMARKED

## Lamps Have Indicated Executive Home Ever Since Early Dutch Days, and Policemen Guard It—Mr. Walker's Modest Home

NEW YORK'S "executive mansion" is a movable place. It might have been otherwise if Mayor Fernando Wood had had his way in 1861, when, swept off his feet by the greatness of America's metropolis, he proposed to the Common Council that New York secede from the Union, taking with her Staten Island and Brooklyn, and set herself up as Tri-Insula, an independent unit, patterned after the old imperial cities of Germany. But about this time New York forgot her own importance in the national crisis and busied herself, instead, in helping to keep the Union together. Thus the grand ideas of Mayor Wood came to naught. Else New York surely would have her executive mansion, another item on the sightseer's list.

As it is, though the job of Mayor of New York may be bigger than that of Governor of some States, no quarters go with it. And sightseers seldom bother with the Mayor's dwelling place, yesterday in Brooklyn, the day before on Riverside Drive, and today on the border of Greenwich Village. What tourist would ever find Mayor Walker's home, that modest, three-story-and-basement house, mated with the rest in its row on St. Luke's Place, a side street that does not even cross the main thoroughfare? If visitors to the city happened to pass that way, they might pause to watch the games in Hudson Park, but they would have no reason to notice No. 6, across the street.

The Mayor's domicile, whether bought, rented or inherited, is his private concern, with one exception. He may not always call it absolutely his own, as Mayor Walker recently realized when he returned to his home after an absence of many weeks. He had been living at a hotel. No one could live at 6 St. Luke's Place. The house was in a turmoil of painting, plastering and paper hanging, and new furnishings were coming in to fit the place up suitably for the city's Mayor. When things were almost done, Mrs. Walker moved in, to superintend the finishing touches, but the Mayor was not to come until everything was done. Late one night he took it into his head to inspect the improvements himself. As he stepped from his car and started for the door, a policeman barred his way.

"You can't go in there," he said firmly. "That's Mayor Walker's house."

"I know it," the newcomer replied. "I'm Mayor Walker."

### Mayor Barred From House.

But the policeman remained unconvinced, and the owner of the dwelling finally had to turn away. An hour or so before, to make matters worse, the Mayor had been denied access by telephone. The operator, acting under orders, refused to disclose his new private number, which he had forgotten. For the first time in his life he was now forbidden entrance to his boyhood home, and that by a servant of the city of which he himself was chief, so vigilantly is the home of the Mayor protected.

In many respects the home of the Mayor may differ little from that of a private citizen. But this is an important difference—a policeman always walks up and down in front of it, or leans against a post near by. He serves as a sort of guard of honor, ever on the lookout to see that everything is all right. Once a ruffian attempted to shoot a Mayor, and many times persons decidedly unwelcome have tried to make their way into a Mayor's home. In front of the church facing Mayor Hylan's Brooklyn residence there was a police booth; and some one stayed on duty there night and day. Last January that booth was carted off; perhaps soon it will be re-erected on the edge of Hudson Park.

The presence of such a guard does not mean that any one who approaches the Walker home will meet with rebuff similar to that its master met. One must take into account the fact that he came late at night, when the family was not officially "at home." In future only those will be stopped who arouse the patrolman's suspicions by their personal appearance or the hour or manner of their call.

The Mayor's home has another mark of distinction that differentiates it from the dwelling of an ordinary citizen. Large lamps stand sentinel with the policeman out front. With each new Mayor another pair of lamps appears; and the old ones are left burning wherever former Mayors or their descendants dwell. The seasoned New Yorker, particularly if he be of political circles, will know what these lamps mean, and may point out to his sons houses so marked as homes of distinguished men.

### Home and Office Distinct.

Aside from simple human interest, there is no reason why it should make any difference to the average New Yorker to know where his Mayor lives. Hardly any one except close personal friends is ever received there. Many of those whom the Mayor sees every day do not even know his address. Some chosen few may be invited to the privacy of his home for a conference, but those who seek him on business matters go to the City Hall and confront a cordon of attendants. Such a thing as a public function in the home of a New York Mayor is unheard of these days. What entertaining his office requires must be arranged at a more commodious place.

Things were very different in the early days of New York. The head of the town had to be available at most times. It was most important

that people should know where he lived. If there was a complaint to be made, the Mayor got it; and sometimes the complaint could not wait until office hours. If there were couples to be married, the Mayor often married them; and sometimes they took the notion after the day's work was done. Hence it was deemed a good thing and wise to mark with lanterns the Mayor's door, so that none would have trouble finding his way. It has even been suggested of early times that his Honor, returning late at night, may have needed a light to guide his own footsteps. Such a light was a safe indicator in those days before hotels, apartment houses and clubs unnumbered took to displaying them.

Official lanterns were used even before New York had a Mayor, in the times of the Dutch, and that their purpose was mainly to warn intruders away. When the Burgomaster had done entertaining himself, as the custom was, at the town tavern or other gathering place, where jests were exchanged between puffs of pipes and gossip was mullied over with the ale, his lantern bearers with pomp and ceremony escorted him home. When they departed, they customarily hung their lighted lanterns outside the house, to warn boisterous night owls that here his Honor slept and desired to be left in peace.

### Mayors' Homes Scattered.

The lanterns that marked the old-time Mayors' homes were shifted around considerably on the lower end of Manhattan, from John Lawrence's "house and store" on the river between Hanover and Wall Streets; to Francois Rombout's on the site of Trinity Church; to Stephen van Cortlandt's on Pearl Street; to William Dyre's up in the suburbs on Broadway at Pine Street; back to Gabriel Minville's, opposite Bowling Green; to William Peartree's "house and grounds" on Beaver Street, and so on. The Mayor's home was generally a place of importance; and the Mayors were prosperous men. James Duane, New York's first American Mayor, dwelt at Gramercy Park; and William Paulding, serving about 1825, lived on Paulding Row, one of the finest blocks in the city, at Jay and Greenwich Streets.

The only Mayors who have had no lamps to mark their domiciles, so far as the records note, are two who served in recent years. When Robert A. Van Wyck entered office in 1898, he refused to have the lamps stationed at his dwelling. They had outlived their usefulness, essential to the day when the Mayor's office was altogether different, he said. He set no store by preserving such a tradition from the past. No lamps were lighted for Mayor Mitchel either, since he dwelt in an apartment house and no one could see the sense of honoring all the tenants merely because they shared a roof with the Mayor.

The passing years have changed New York and swept away or altered past recognition many structures long honored as Mayors' homes yet a few

remain in front of which lamps maintained by the Department of Street Lighting cast their glow over the stoop. Mayor Hylan's lamps still burn before his Bushwick Avenue home, but that house is destined for the distinction only a little longer. When Mr. Hylan moves out to Forest Hills, the lamps will go with the rest of his effects.

### Lamps Moved With Mayors.

These will not be the first such lamps to follow ex-Mayors. Those highly decorative iron bases and caps with large round globes between, which mark the gray stone Grant home at 20 East Seventy-second Street, were moved there from the house where Hugh J. Grant lived when he was Mayor, from 1889 to 1892. The lamps of Mayor Franklin Edson were moved, too, when he changed his home after he went out of office in 1884. When James Harper was Mayor, back in 1844, he lived on Rose Street; but ten years later he moved to Gramercy Park; and there today his lamps, with their heavily spiked crowns, light the way to the wrought iron balconies that ornament No. 4. The Harper family occupied this dwelling until a few years ago; and after their departure no one troubled to take the lamps away.

Another pair of Mayor's lamps, also with spiked crowns, though of more delicate design, may be seen just around the corner from Gramercy Park. On their slender stems they form part of the iron fence about the small yard of the huge red brick house where the daughter of Abram S. Hewitt, Mayor in 1887-1888, still resides.

Further up Lexington Avenue, near Thirty-ninth Street, another pair, of massive though simpler design, may catch the attention. This block is fast yielding to demands of business. The once imposing entrances of its "brown stone fronts" have been simplified. No. 338 is the only one that retains its stoop. There on their weather-worn bases rest the lamps of William H. Wickham, Mayor in 1875-1878. Wickhams live there yet. Until two years ago, there were a pair of Mayor's lamps at 31 East Seventy-ninth Street, where William R. Grace, Mayor in 1881-1882, once lived. Then his son moved away to make room for a fourteen-story apartment house and the lamps were taken away.

At least two homes of former Mayors have outlived their special mark of distinction. Of the home of Seth Low, on the southwest corner of Sixty-fourth Street and Madison Avenue, the peaked and turreted upper stories remain. But the lower floors have acquired glass fronts; and a bakery and a notions shop possess what was once the Mayor's parlor. Seth Low gave up his residence before his death. It was then altered for business purposes and the lamps disappeared.

The home of George B. McClellan, son of the General, and himself Mayor following Seth Low, stands little changed, on the north side of Washington Square, one of a row of tall brick houses with tiny front yards and broad steps leading up to high white doors. Some of its neighbors have decorations on the posts at the bottom of their stone balustrades, such things as crowing roosters and richly caparisoned sphynxes. But those that formerly belonged to a Mayor are marked only with five round scars, where his lamps were once attached. After his term of office, Mayor McClellan moved to the Manhattan Club, and persons unrelated to the family took the house.

## MORSE, TELEGRAPH INVENTOR, WAS ALSO CELEBRATED AS AN ARTIST

SAMUEL F. B. MORSE, whose birthday anniversary occurs on April 27, has become so renowned as the inventor of the telegraph that the celebrity he acquired as an artist is often overlooked. His artistic tendencies early began to manifest themselves. He studied with great masters and exhibited in the best salons. His ability won for him so many prizes and brought him so much fame that his name would have gone down in history had he never accomplished anything in electro-magnetic telegraphy.

The first indication of Morse's talent as an artist was the portrait of his teacher he scratched upon his bureau. At 15 he composed a water color of a room in his father's house, with his parents, two brothers and himself around a table. Later, when a student at Yale, he pieced out his rather meagre allowance by painting on ivory the portraits of his more opulent companions at \$5 each.

After graduating from Yale, in 1810, he resolved to study with Washington Allston, one of America's most illustrious painters. He accompanied Allston to Europe, bearing letters to many of England's most distinguished men. Encouraged by his friends, he began to paint a large picture for exhibition in the Royal Academy and chose for his subject the "Dying Hercules." When exhibited in the Royal Academy, critics placed it among the first twelve pictures in a show of almost two thousand.

Morse subsequently returned to America. In 1825 he completed his full-length portrait of Lafayette, which he had done from life at the request of the Government of New York City. He was also commissioned to prepare a portrait of James Monroe, then President of the United States.

After varied experiences Morse settled in New York and is credited with having established the National Academy of Arts and Design, of which he became the first President and to which office he was re-elected from 1827 until 1845. His discourse on academies of art, delivered before the New York Athenaeum, showed his knowledge of the literature of art. He delivered the first course of lectures on the fine arts ever given in America.

While on his second visit to Europe, Morse made himself acquainted with the work of scientific men in endeavoring to communicate intelligence be-

tween distant places out of the line of vision by means of electro-magnetism. It was while on the return voyage from Europe in 1832 that he conceived the idea of an electro-magnetic and chemical recording telegraph.

Before the ship had reached New York he had elaborated his conception in the form of drawings and specifications. These he exhibited to fellow-passengers. This fact, proved by the testimony of those passengers given in a court of justice, fixes the date of the invention of Morse's electro-magnetic recording telegraph as the Autumn of 1832, when this voyage was made, though the first recording apparatus was not completed until 1835.

### WILD ANIMALS STILL WORRY THE FARMER

THE United States suffers heavy loss every year from the depredations of more or less wild animals. An investigation was made by the Department of Agriculture recently to determine the exact nature of the danger in various sections of the country. It is estimated that a wildcat in a farming region does, on the average about \$50 worth of damage a year, while a wolf does ten times as much.

It is often argued that these predatory animals do more good than harm, since they prey upon rodents and other enemies of the farmers. Government examination shows, however, that the good they do in exterminating rats, field mice and other rodents is trifling in comparison with the loss of domestic animals and game.

The wildcat prefers sheep. Poultry comes next. The coyote preys upon sheep, goats and poultry. The mountain lion is a gross feeder, and the wolf is especially fond of all kinds of meat raised on farms.

### FOG DISPERSAL

HONGKONG, the island off the southeast coast of China occupied by Great Britain, is subject to many fogs. Dust blown from the mainland collects minute atoms of water, creating the fog and endangering shipping. An English professor has convinced Hongkong residents of his ability to convert fog into rain, thus dispersing haze, and the Hongkong Government has voted \$2,500 for the necessary electrical apparatus to test the professor's theory.