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THE CRAFTSMAN'S BIRTHDAY PARTY: BY THE EDITOR

It has been the custom of The Craftsman for the past twelve years to celebrate the day of its birth—October 1, 1901—with some homelike festivity. We have usually talked a little in the magazine about our hopes and plans, and when we have branched out into any new and broader Craftsman enterprise we have liked it to happen at that good time of the year. For in our birthday month we take stock of our successes and our failures, and in striking a balance we like to feel that the year has meant progress along some line,—the development of our ideal through some practical, comfortable channel.

Those of our friends who know the magazine well, know how often we have spoken of the Craftsman ideal,—an ideal of the kind of life that means beauty, economy, reason, comfort, progress. And they know, too, that we have never rested content to have that ideal expressed through one channel only. It did not satisfy me merely to achieve the Craftsman ideal in furniture, for as I found people needed and wanted good strong durable furniture I felt at once that they must also have the right kind of houses in which to place the furniture. I no sooner began to design Craftsman houses than I realized that people, our friends, wanted Craftsman fabrics, Craftsman fittings of all kinds. And now is coming from all quarters of the globe a demand for a Craftsman center in New York.

Since we have commenced our Craftsman Department of Service, we have received many letters saying, "We want to know more about what you are doing. We want when we come to New York to be able to visit some place that will show us all that The Craftsman stands for. We want really to feel that there is a Craftsman home center in New York, a place where we can rest, where we can look about, where we can come in contact with the whole outgrowth of the original Craftsman idea; where we can ask advice, where we can meet our friends, where we shall cease to be strangers with the Craftsman movement." So incessant has been this call that at last I decided to secure the kind of building that would enable us to enlarge our activities along every line that our friends are interested in, so that when they came to New York they could visit us, study with us, work with us and find out every detail of Craftsman achievement so far as they could be presented in one twelve-story building. It sounds a large undertaking, in New York, to fill the space of a building running up twelve stories, extending from an entrance on 38th St., just off of Fifth Ave., to an entrance on 39th St., equally near the main artery of New York—a building so tall that it looks over the city, to the rivers beyond and the harbor, and with so much space that we can not only show our furniture and our house fittings and all the accompanying beautiful things that go with them, but that we shall be able to install draughting rooms for the designing of Craftsman houses, editorial rooms for The Craftsman Magazine, circulation and advertising departments, as well as various harmonious enterprises that are closely allied with Craftsman achievement. Above all, literally above because it will occupy the top stories of the building, we shall have a Craftsman restaurant, where we are planning to serve wholesome, delectable meals to our friends and patrons, and where we shall have waiting rooms, reading rooms, bureaus of information, resting places for women and children, flower stands, every comfort and convenience, in fact, that people living in New York or visitors to New York would enjoy finding in the midst of a day's pleasure or work.

We are not starting a restaurant because we feel that we want to go into the restaurant business, but because we feel that certain ideals of cooking and furnishings should be expressed in connection with a restaurant. We want to see just how comfortable, how simple, how beautiful such rooms can be made. We want people to be happy in them, to brighten their ideals of life through contact with them. This restaurant will be intimately associated with Craftsman Farms, naturally, and all the wholesome products people crave in a city will be brought in every morning from the Farms in our own motor trucks. The butter, milk, eggs, poultry, fruit, vegetables, flowers will all come direct to the restaurant from the wide acres of our farm at Morris Plains, New Jersey. We want the people who enjoy coming to see us to realize that not only will they find perfectly arranged rooms and well-set tables, open fireplaces, sunshiny windows, comfortable chairs, good
reading matter, but that the food itself will be as near an ideal of good living as we know how to produce.

I realize that in many ways it is a great opportunity for me to have secured this large building now in process of construction so near Fifth Ave., for it is in the center of New York’s retail district, of easy access to every part of the city, so well placed that sunlight and fresh air are forever assured and so commodious that we shall have ample room to make welcome all our friends and all those interested in our work.

The Craftsman idea has always seemed a very big thing to me, or I could not have devoted my life to it; but as I go over this vast structure day after day, I sometimes say to myself, is this idea big enough to fill every story, every corner of every story with big vital human interest? Because I feel that the enterprise to be satisfactory must have a spiritual as well as material success. We want to stand in this new departure, as we have stood in all the others, for a high ideal of democratic life in America. We want the winds from over the river and the sun from heaven to pour into the rooms of this building, lighting them and freshening them in spirit as well as in physical comfort.

It seems to me that the various people who are working in association with me out over the country will find it a good thing to have this sort of headquarters in New York where we can from time to time meet surrounded by our mutual interests and establish an intimacy much closer than is ever possible by correspondence. I feel that we owe a great debt to those who have worked with us in the past at long distances, and I am sure that in no way could I express our appreciation more fully than by welcoming our associates to the Craftsman Headquarters in New York.

In talking of our hopes for this great enterprise in the fall we do not want to seem in any way pretentious, or to claim for ourselves more than our friends expect of us. But we do feel that for the first time in our lives we are going to have the opportunity and the space to present the various developments that the Craftsman idea has inspired, that those who have been interested in Craftsman furniture because it helped them to solve an economical home-making, those who have had Craftsman houses and found that they helped to solve servant and housekeeping problems, and those who have taken The Craftsman Magazine and found it an inspiration and a practical aid for daily life, will enjoy the opportunity of seeing all these different Craftsman activities together. Our friends will know at a glance to what extent our scheme of living is wise and harmonious, also where we fail, where we need counsel, and we believe that those who come to see us in our new Craftsman quarters will have as much to bring as we have to offer. Indeed, the project would not be worth carrying out if it did not mean mutual benefit and happiness.

In planning to use the space in the new building I want not only to arrange to give the utmost comfort and pleasure to visitors to the Craftsman headquarters, but also to those who are working with me, those who are heart and soul in the Craftsman idea. And so we are going to plan a restaurant, a resting room, a place where people can meet those who are working with us. I intend that every detail of my arrangements shall be as comfortable, as hygienic, as attractive, as homelike as it is possible to accomplish. I do not want any “backyard” in this Craftsman Building. I realize that this is a towering ideal to be associated with a commercial enterprise, but after all, with us the ideal came first, and our enterprise has grown out of it.

With the opening of this Building the first day of October, we wish to extend an invitation for our birthday party to all our friends. We want to be happier because we feel that they are with us. We want them to be happy in this first bringing together of our Craftsman projects under one roof. We want an old-fashioned home-making of the kind that used to be in New England on Thanksgiving Day, back when people were happy because of the home feeling and because of the need of real friendship among them. We expect to hold open house at our new headquarters at the beginning of our thirteenth year. The heartiest welcome we can express will be found from one end of our building to the other. We want our friends to enjoy it, and we want to be sure that they go away to their own homes feeling that there is really a home center in this great city of New York, that at the Craftsman Building the latch-string is always out.

Having just passed my fifty-fifth birthday, I realize that I am facing the greatest
THE CRAFTSMAN BUILDING

The "Craftsman Building," which will be the center of all Craftsman activities for some years to come, is located practically in the heart of New York. The great flood of the city's finest trade pours past its doors; the Bryant Park Public Library, the beautiful Morgan Library, the new Grand Central Station, the most famous art galleries, the Union League Club, Tiffany's, McCreery's, Altman's, Lord & Taylor's, Bonwit, Teller & Co., Kursman, Franklin Simon & Co., one and all are within less than five minutes' walk; on the highest point of land, touching the Murray Hill restricted district, it crowns that portion of New York which is the most beautiful, most vital center of business and social life.

Naturally in looking for a home for The Craftsman we have wanted the best location and building to be found. We selected the present structure because in addition to its perfect location, it is the best lighted building we could find. Its length of 200 feet, its double entrance, its height of twelve stories, the lighting, wood finish and absolute fireproof construction all combining to make an ideal building for our purpose. We wanted space not only for a large restaurant, for the magazine, for draughting rooms, for our workshops, but especially for a "Permanent Home-builders' Exhibit." This Home Exhibit we shall make so complete that it will furnish architects, builders as well as home-makers an opportunity to see every detail of modern home-building, fitting and furnishing collected under one roof and all in harmony with the best ideal of the day.

On the various floors given up to this Exhibit will be displayed every sort of building material, such as concrete, cement, wood, stone, brick, hollow tile, etc. Miniature houses will show not only methods of construction, but every kind of roofing, wall treatments, paints, stains.

Fittings and fixtures, which are such an important feature of the comfortable house will be given ample and effective space. All the details of perfect sanitary equipment will be shown, as well as electrical conveniences for lighting, cooking and heating. In fact, a trip through the Craftsman Building will show the home-builder all that good sense, art and science can do, in combination, for the American house.

We have already spoken of our plans for a restaurant at the top of the Craftsman Building. It may be of interest to mention that these rooms will all be fitted up from the Craftsman Workshops. Furniture, fabrics, table linen, curtains, silver, dishes, everything will be designed by Mr. Stickley with especial view to their appropriateness for the Craftsman restaurant. Our purpose is not merely to add to the list of places where food may be obtained in New York, but to establish a place where the best food may be really enjoyed.

One floor, or perhaps in several different rooms, some of the most interesting of modern crafts will be seen in operation. Skilled craftsmen will be found making willow furniture, weaving baskets, binding books; the whirr of the potter's wheel will be heard and the sound of the metal-worker's hammer. In these rooms will be found not only the opportunity to study the hand-work of the craftsmen, but to work with them, especially where students are anxious to perfect their craft. Fabrics will also here be designed, and new ideas for embroidering sofa pillows, window curtains, portières and bedroom sets will be furnished to order, harmonious in design, with color and furnishings of a well thought out house. In fact, it would be very hard for a woman, whether she is most interested in her reception room, her dining room, her kitchen or her nursery, not to find in this vast building the opportunity to realize a home complete in beauty, comfort and economy.

Our draughting rooms will always be open for consultation, and Craftsman subscribers will enjoy the opportunity of talking over their homes with trained architects under the supervision of Mr. Stickley, who feels that nothing is more important in America today than the development of the home.

Of course there will be an opportunity for taking up the matter of gardening, for the Craftsman house naturally suggests its own kind of surroundings, and advice will be furnished to the prospective builders of Craftsman houses as to the laying out of