



"The Manufacturer's Club Reception to the Postmaster General"

John Wanamaker, Postmaster General of the United States  
April 10, 1889

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*John Wanamaker, Philadelphia merchant, was appointed Postmaster General of the United States by President Benjamin Harrison and served in Washington, DC as a member of the President's Cabinet from 1889-1893. He and his wife moved to Washington and lived at 1731 I Street during that time though they maintained their home at "Lindhurst" in Jenkintown, PA. Wanamaker returned to Philadelphia by train each weekend in order to continue his work as Superintendent of the Bethany Sunday School at Twenty-second and Bainbridge Streets in Philadelphia. It was the school he started in 1858 while serving as the Secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association, and which he continued to lead throughout his long business career until his death at the age of eighty-four in 1922. On April 10, 1899 he was honored by the Manufacturers' Club in Philadelphia, as reported in the following article in one of the Philadelphia newspapers.*

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*Public Ledger - April 11, 1889  
Philadelphia, PA*

A Large Number of Guests Pay Their Respects - Secretary of the Interior Noble - and  
Generals Hazen and Tyner Present - Elaborate Decorations

Postmaster General Wanamaker was tendered a reception last evening by the Manufacturer's Club at the new club house, Number 1409 Walnut Street.

Over one thousand members and guests of the club paid their respects to Philadelphia's representative in the Cabinet, expressing in various ways their satisfaction with his selection for the position he now fills.

Mr. Wanamaker arrived from Washington shortly after 7 o'clock, accompanied by Secretary of the Interior Noble, Third Assistant Postmaster General Hazen, and General Joseph N. Tyner. They were driven to the residence of Thomas Dolan, President of the Manufacturers' Club, whence they proceeded to the clubhouse in company with Mayor Fidler and the other members of the Reception Committee.

The commencement of the reception had the effect of crowding the street in front of the clubhouse with people who had assembled to catch a glimpse of the distinguished guest, and who were entertained by the music that floated out through the half-opened windows.

**The Decorations of the Club House**

The decorations of the Club House were entirely of a floral character and nearly every seasonable plant and flower was represented in the collection that adorned the stairway mantels and walls. On either side of the main entrance was a rustic stand bearing palms and rare exotics. Over the doorway hung the floral monogram "M.C.," entwined in festoons of smilax. The main stairway of carved oak was elaborately adorned with green. Streamers of laurel hung in loops along the rail mingling with smilax and evergreen.



Over each post were large (plaques) of roses and ferns, and flowering palm trees occupied positions on the landings.

On a rope of smilax, extending from the top floor to the staircase well, hung on each floor, clusters of electric lights. The skylight over the well was of a delicate tinted cathedral glass, through which shone a collection of electric lights placed on the roof. The elaborately carved oak and mirrored mantels, facing the stairs on each floor, were banked with ferns and hyacinths and surrounded with palms.

On either side of the mantel, on the second floor, were large portraits of Mr. Wanamaker and Mr. Dolan. In the front apartment on the same floor the orchestra was placed behind a screen of plants, in front of which was a life-size bust of Mr. Wanamaker.

### **Arrival of the Guests**

It was not until half-past eight o'clock that the Reception Committee arrived with Mr. Wanamaker and his colleagues. The stairs leading to the reception room in the second floor by this time were lined with members and their guests. Mayor Fidler led the way to the coat room, followed by Mr. Wanamaker, who smilingly nodded to those in his immediate vicinity.

It was remarked by those near him that the Postmaster General never looked better since his elevation to public life. His face was ruddy in appearance, his dancing eyes indicating unusual exuberance of spirits, and a smile of contentment lighting his whole countenance, during the whole evening.

The committee, with the distinguished guests, made their way to the elevator and were soon ensconced on a temporary platform to the reception room.

Mr. Wanamaker's arrival was announced by a storm of hand-clapping. He was followed to the platform by the gentlemen who assisted him. Mr. Dolan occupied a position to the left of Mr. Wanamaker, and announced the names of those who presented themselves to the Postmaster General.

On Mr. Wanamaker's right, were Mayor Fidler, Secretary of the Interior Noble, General Tyner, James Dobson, General Hazen, Jacob S. Cramp, and Horace Disston.

The reception room was elaborately decorated, the platform being almost concealed behind a bank of cut flowers, palms, and flowering plants. Above the receiving party was a large floral design in the shape of an envelope, about two and a-half feet wide by five feet long. The body was composed of white azaleas, supplemented with red and pink roses.

Across the face was the address in similar dark flower, "Hon. John Wanamaker, Washington, D.C.". In the top right hand corner was the representation of a two-cent stamp, and in the top left-hand corner the monogram of the ciao. Just in front of Mr. Wanamaker was a small balustrade covered with smilax, intertwined with white and pink roses and other cut flowers.

The guests were directed towards the platform along the right side of the room, and departed on the left, forming a continuous stream, which did not cease till 10 o'clock when the distinguished guests made an inspection of the new club home. As familiar faces were noted by Mr. Wanamaker, an extra clasp of the hand emphasized some pleasant remark appropriate to the moment. (END)

*(The names of all guests were listed in the newspaper article)*