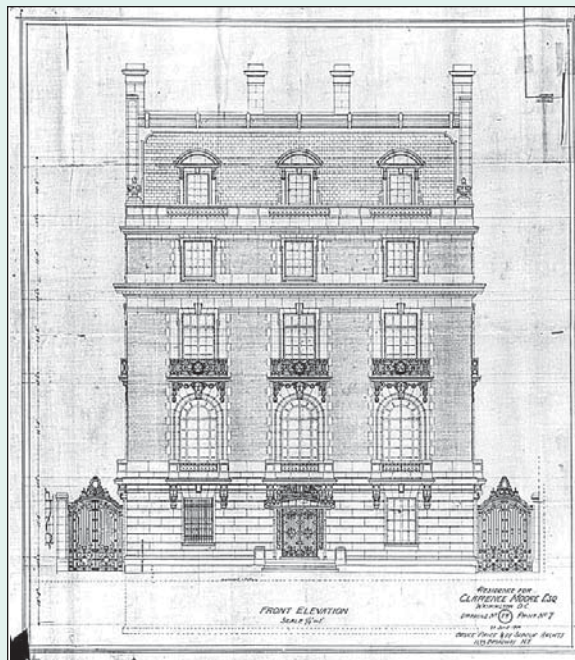


# Scenes from the Past



photo—Kelsey & Assoc. private collection drawing—Library of Congress, Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS).

The mansion at 1746 Massachusetts Avenue seen today and in the original 1906 elevation drawing (below) by architect Jules Henri de Sibour.



The imposing former mansion at 1746 Massachusetts Avenue was commissioned by local stock broker Clarence Moore, who would only enjoy his residence for less than three years, having booked a journey on the fateful maiden voyage of the Titanic in 1912. The mansion has served as an embassy since 1927. The Louis XV styled mansion was designed by Jules Henri de Sibour in 1906, and was completed in 1909 at an estimated cost of \$200,000.

Clarence Bloomfield Moore was born in Clarksburg, West Virginia on March 1, 1865. After graduating from Dufferin College, he partnered with Senator Stephen Elkins and Henry Gassaway in developing several successful mineral mines in West Virginia. His first wife, Alice McLaughlin, died in 1897, leaving two children; Frances Sarah Preston and Samuel Preston Moore. Three years later, he married Mabelle Swift with whom he had two additional children, Jasper and Clarence, Jr.

In 1900, Moore moved to Washington, when he became a member of the Washington, DC stock brokerage firm of William B. Hibbs and Co, which paid

him an annual salary of \$25,000. At the time, the typical government worker earned less than \$2,000. Moore also owned a farm in Montgomery County, Maryland, where he raised cattle and horses, and had interests in real estate near Leesburg, Virginia.

Moore had been in England to shop for fox hounds for the Loudoun Hunt. He purchased 50 pairs, although they did not return with Moore on the Titanic despite them being portrayed in the movie *Titanic*.

Just three years after completing the house at 1746 Massachusetts Avenue, Moore boarded the *Titanic* at Southampton as a first class passenger with ticket number 113796, costing £42 8s in April of 1912. His manservant Charles Harrington, age 37, accompanied him. At the time of the collision Moore was playing cards in the smoking room with his compatriots and dining companions Major Archibald Willingham Butt, Harry Widener, and William Carter.

Moore, Harrington, and Major Butt were all residents of Washington at the time of the sinking, three of just five residents aboard the fateful trip traveling in first class. The others included Archibald Gracie IV (1859-1912) and Helen Churchill Candee (1858-1949).

Gracie was an American writer, amateur historian, real estate investor, and survived the sinking by climbing aboard an overturned collapsible lifeboat, and wrote a popular and valuable book about the disaster which is still in print today. Candee was an American author, journalist, interior decorator, feminist and geographer who resided at 1621 New Hampshire Avenue who joined the "Unsinkable Molly Brown" in lifeboat No. 6. She is famous for writing "There were no more boats, water was swirling around the upper deck, people were beginning to panic . . . and the band continued to play." [Ed. Note: Candee was the focus of a previous feature in this series. See, "Scenes from the Past," November 2008, page 10; available in the archive at [www.intowner.com](http://www.intowner.com).]

Major Butt (1865-1912) was an influential military aide to U.S. presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft. Before becoming an aide to Roosevelt, Butt had pursued a career in journalism and served in the Spanish-American War.

Following the sinking on April 14, 1912, Mrs. Mabelle Moore made a claim of \$500,000, for loss of future income and \$10,500 for loss of property, including \$3,000 for pearl studs and \$2,500 for pearl cuff links. She also claimed for loss of personal effects and other jewelry and for legal costs.

The *Washington Times* April 22, 1912 edition included a story about the last moments of Moore's life, gleaned by a survivor named Robert Daniels. It read:

"Robert W. Daniels Says Banker Went to His Death Like a Man. Stories of the heroism and resignation with which Clarence Moore, the well-known local banker and horseman of international repute, went to his death on the deck of the Titanic as she sank to her grave two miles beneath the Atlantic, are being told by several survivors of the disaster today who arrived in Washington to attend the Senatorial hearing.

"Clarence Moore died beyond a doubt at the side of his friend and fellow-hero, Major Archibald Butt. They remained together while lowering woman and children into the lifeboats, and jumped at the eleventh hour when the boilers of the giant ship burst.

"Repeatedly, Moore refused to take a place in one of the boats, the survivors who saw him say. His friend, Butt, knew that he was an oarsman, in fact, he realized that Clarence Moore could do most anything any true sportsman could, so he requested Moore to man an oar in one of the last lifeboats to leave the ship.

"No, major, I'll stay and take my chances with you; let the women go," Moore said to his companion according to Robert William Daniels, one of the survivors, who is stopping at the New Willard. "And he evidently stuck with Butt until death took them both," said Mr. Daniels. "The two men jumped at the eleventh hour and were lost."

J. Bruce Ismay, Col. Archibald Gracie and Miss Vera Dick, of Calgary, Canada, all of whom knew the banker, corroborate Daniels' story regarding the last moments of Moore, and say that, with Major Butt, he went to his death in the waters like a true man.

As for 1746 Massachusetts Avenue, the house was sold by Moore's widow to the newly sovereign Canadian government in 1927, which before that year had been represented in diplomatic circles by the British government, who would continue to own it until the



photo—Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.

Clarence B. Moore, owner of 1746 Massachusetts Avenue who perished on the Titanic in 1912.



photos—Library of Congress, HABS. An interior hallway and grand staircase at 1746 Massachusetts Avenue.



1980s. The former mansion is today the Embassy of Uzbekistan.

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photo—Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division. View of the Titanic as the giant ship was being brought into position to receive its maiden voyage passengers in April of 1912.