



WHEN a few days the alarm gong will sound for the first time on board the latest addition to the powerful fleet of fire boats owned by the City of New York. The boats now in service are the William F. Havemeyer, built in 1875; Zophar Mills, 1882; Seth Low, 1888; The New Yorker, 1890, and David A. Boody, 1892.

The new arrival, called Robert A. Van Wyck, will greatly strengthen this branch of the service, and was designed by H. de B. Parsons, a consulting engineer of this city.

The hull, deck houses, and bulkheads are entirely made of steel, and practically the only wood used is in the construction of the decks. These decks are protected against damage by fire by means of a sprinkling system operated with ball nozzles.

In order to give better and cooler quarters for the crew, the boat is arranged with a deck house, which gives it the general appearance of an ocean tug, although the resemblance is lost on close inspection.

The boat was built at the yard of John H. Dialogue & Son, Camden, N. J., and the fire pumps were supplied by the American Fire Engine Company. The boat is 110 feet long over all, 102 feet on the water line, 20 feet beam, and draws 9 feet of water.

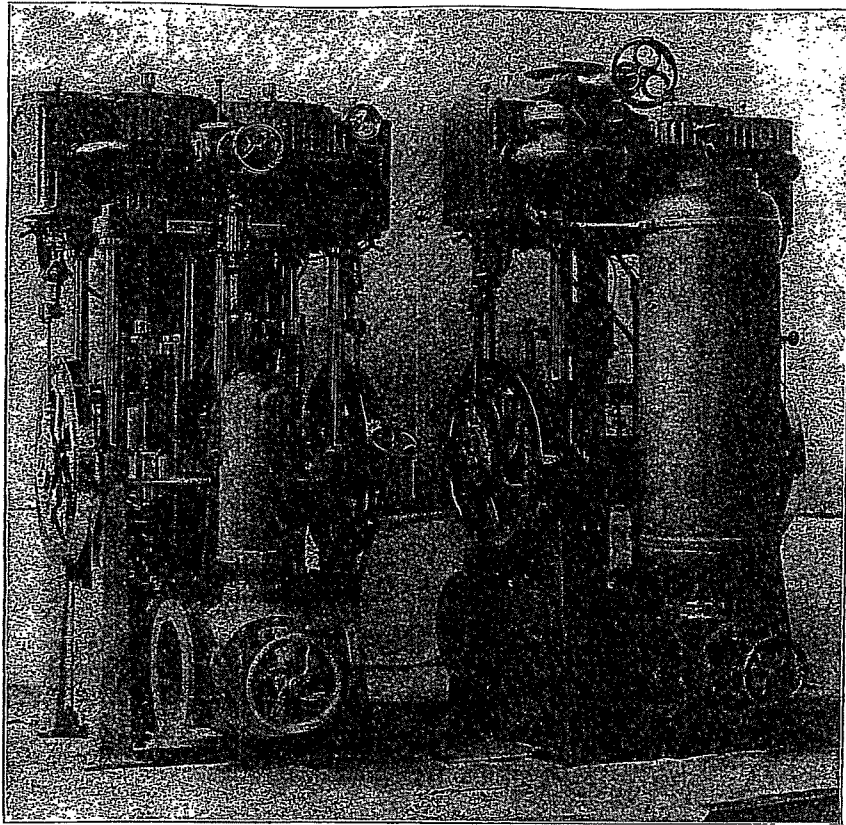
The construction is very strong, and everything has been done to make the boat durable and able to withstand the hard usage in the service for which she is adapted. The engine rests on a heavy foundation, and the weight of the boilers is carried by increasing the depth of the floors beneath them. The boat was launched on Nov. 27, 1897.

The propelling power is supplied by a 460 horse power compound condensing engine, having cylinders 16 inches and 30 inches in diameter, with a stroke of 22 inches. Steam at 135 pounds' pressure on the square inch is supplied by two Scotch boilers, each 10 feet 1 inch in diameter, and weighing, when full of water, about twenty tons, and are of a strong and durable type. In fact, every care was taken to keep the machinery simple in construction and free from complication, as well as to eliminate, as far as possible, all chances for a break-down. The machinery is so planned that one engineer can operate, in case of emergency, the two fire pumps and the main engine without having to leave the starting platform. There is no part of the machinery that is not open at all sides for inspection and cleaning, thus leaving ample room for making repairs rapidly and at short notice.

On March 10 the boat was given a working trial on the Delaware River, and every part worked satisfactorily on a run of sixty miles at full power. The speed was nearly thirteen miles per hour, a very creditable result for a vessel of 395 tons dead weight supported on such a short length.

The two fire pumps (see photograph) are duplex, so that there are four pumping cylinders. These are considered the finest pumps ever constructed for a fireboat. On the trial the starboard pump discharged 3,450 gallons per minute at a pressure of 190 pounds; while the port pump discharged 3,450 gallons against 195 pounds; so that both working together would deliver over 6,910 gallons at 170 pounds, which is the usual fire service pressure. This is equivalent to more than six of the largest land engines, but in reality is far more effective, due to the heavy single streams that can be thrown. The size of these pumps may be appreciated better from the fact that the two suction pipes are sixteen inches in diameter. Furthermore, the pumps are so arranged that either one or both can be used to pump out the bilge in case of accident to the boat or of injury to the hull by collision. The boat will be equipped with three water towers, so arranged as to throw streams varying from 2 1/2 inches to 5 inches in diameter. In addition to these water towers there are twelve discharge valves to connect with hose lines of 3 1/2 inches and 6 inches in diameter. These large hose can be stowed; that is, two smaller lines can be connected to one large hose if necessary.

The supply of hose is carried on deck in large boxes within easy reach, and a spacious storeroom has been arranged in the deckhouse for the nozzles and play



THE FIRE PUMPS OF THE ROBERT A. VAN WYCK.

pipes, in which every piece will have its proper place upon suitable racks.

While the general arrangement of the boat is simple—all unnecessary fancy work having been omitted—the appointments are most complete. The pilot house is high, thus enabling effective fire streams to be thrown from its upper deck. The inside is finished in cherry, and has a large berth seat. Directly beneath is the steam steering engine, entirely under the control of the pilot and designed to change to the hand wheel within a few seconds in case of accident. Aft of the pilot house is the Captain's cabin and office, containing a berth and arranged for a desk and other conveniences for the management of a fire station. The next space is devoted to the boiler room hatch, nozzle rooms, lamproom, &c. The after end of the deckhouse contains the entrance to the engine room and a large sleeping and living room for the crew. The iron bulkheads are all left uncovered for the sake of cleanliness, but are neatly painted and grained to resemble ash, giving a very natural and tasteful appearance.

Forward there is a large arcaicade with berths, and aft two large staterooms for the engineers, the space between being all used for the machinery.

The great weight of machinery and supplies made it necessary to give the hull comparatively full lines. This was considered better than increasing the length, in order to obtain a good manoeuvring ability, since the exigencies of the service require quick handling in and out among the docks and slips. The boat made a complete turn in her trial run in the short time of forty-five seconds.

Slips, and he told me that William Street from John Street northward was called Horse and Cart Street, from an inn there bearing such a sign. David Grim told Mr. Lydig that he had seen the river water flowing over Chatham and Pearl Streets and extending from the East to the North River, along the line of the Collect. The same old gentleman remembered when the only lamp in the city was at the corner of Wall Street and William.

The house 170 Water Street was the first in New York to exchange tinden sashes for wooden ones. The City Corporation granted to Trinity Church in 1703 the grounds for "a burying place for the inhabitants of the city forever, and upon any of the inhabitants of the said city paying therefor to the rector, &c., 2s. for each corpse above twelve years of age and 1s. 6d. for any under twelve years of age, and no more."

BRADFORD'S PRINTING PRESS.

The first printing press set up in New York City was in 1693, and the first printer was William Bradford, who came from Philadelphia. This printer Bradford was the grandfather of Attorney General Bradford of Washington's Administration. According to good authorities on local history, the first book printed in New York was a small folio of the laws of the colony by Bradford, and that same printer began the publication of a newspaper on Oct. 16, 1725. In the following year John Peter Zenger came to New York, and, not agreeing with Bradford's political views, started

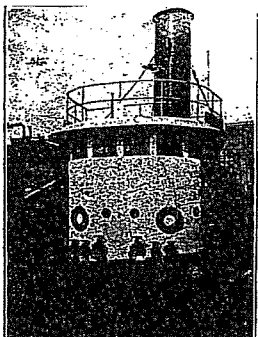
a paper of his own soon afterward. Zenger was strongly imbued with Americanism and Bradford was a loyalist. Zenger was arrested and tried for having attacked members of the Government, but was acquitted. His case caused a great stir at the time.

Until about 1780 there was no daily paper in New York. F. Child & Co. started The New York Daily Advertiser in that year. Just prior to the appearance of this daily there were two weekly newspapers in the city, one conducted by Hugh Gaine and the other by Mr. Wayman. Gaine wore a powdered wig and was a famous character. He lived at the Bible and Crown, in Exchange Square, the place being marked by a memorable sign of the Bible.

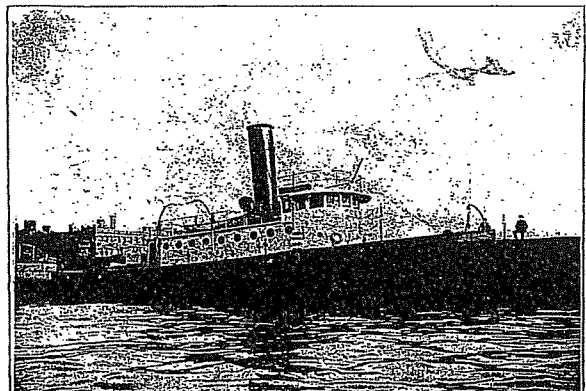
WHEN NEW YORK WAS YOUNG.

In some of the "historic tales of the olden time" concerning the early settlement and advancement of New York City occur many interesting allusions to localities which are now familiar. For instance, John F. Watson, writing of this city as it was late in the seventeenth and early in the eighteenth centuries, says: "Mr. Abraham Brower told me that the market in Broadway was once leased to a Mr. Crosby for only 20s. for seven years. This was the old Osewego Market, which was originally in Broadway, opposite Liberty Street." It was afterward removed to Maiden Lane. Mr. Brower when a boy never heard the name of Greenwich, although he knew of the village. The Dutch, when they spoke of it, called it Shawbanchoncha, its Indian name.

The original Beekman's Swamp extended from Frankfort Street down to Ferry Street and from William Street to Jacob Street. Mr. Watson talked with an old settler who remembered to have shot ducks there, and another old settler said he had gathered whortleberries there. "Mr. Jacob Tabela, aged eighty-seven," says Mr. Watson, "told me that he had often shot pigeons in Nicholas Bayard's woods, about where Grand Street now is. He had also seen the shipyards between Beekman and Burling



Forward View of the Robert A. Van Wyck, Showing the Fire Pumps.



NEW YORK'S NEW FIRE BOAT—THE ROBERT A. VAN WYCK.