

# Gotham Every Day

By Ross Duff Whytock

New York, June 1.

Until a recent visit with Julio Kilenyi, the sculptor, I had not realized the bearing of the month of May upon the lives of American aviators. As I studied the medallions he designed to commemorate the accomplishments of famous individuals I concluded that May must be the month of attainment for fliers. The replica of the medal struck in honor of the NO-4's trans-Atlantic flight bore the date May 31, 1919; the North Pole Medal, testifying to Commander Richard E. Byrd's leap over the "Big Nail," had the date May 9, 1926; and that designed for the City of St. Louis in honor of Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh was dated May 21, 1927. The sculptor also called my attention to the fact that Lincoln Ellsworth, the American who accompanied Amundsen and Nobile over the pole with the dirigible Norge, made the flight on May 12, 1926.

The walls of Kilenyi's studio are covered with medallions and plaques which he designed to honor men of attainment. There was one of President Coolidge, commemorative of his inauguration on March 4, 1925. Thomas A. Edison, General Pershing, Lord Northcliffe, Judge F. H. Gary, clergymen, actors, musicians and others whose names and works are known afar were represented. Although he has been in the United States only ten years, the talented Hungarian sculptor has been kept busy since his arrival in designing medals and medallions—there is a distinction, I found, between the two—in honor of heroes and history-making events.

There are two Kilenyis—the sculptor-medalist and his brother, Edward, who rates high in musical circles. Edward, who studied music in his native city of Budapest, in Italy and in Germany, came to New York eighteen years ago. He is a composer, a conductor, a writer on musical subjects and an adapter of music to motion pictures. In this latter work he specializes in the arranging of "music cues," and I am told by those who ought to know that his adaptation of the music for "Able's Irish Rose" is a masterpiece. Synchronizing music to motion pictures is a considerable profession, and in it Edward Kilenyi is a leader.

## Bits of Gotham.

Although Gotham's land values reach lowering figures, there are a considerable number of plots around the town that the owners would have difficulty in giving away. This is due to the fact that they are too small to be of any practical use, but they are as much subject to taxation as the site of a fifty-million-dollar skyscraper. The other afternoon at Christopher street and Seventh avenue, in the heart of Greenwich Village, I stood upon one of these valueless bits of Gotham. It is a triangular-shaped piece, measuring three feet each way, and bears an inscription in tile which states: "Property of the Hess Estate, which has never been dedicated to public purposes." It is a portion of a large piece of property that once belonged to David M. Hess, who died in Philadelphia in 1907. The city decided to cut Seventh avenue through the property, and after the job had been completed the Hess heirs discovered that the triangular plot had been overlooked in the survey and they proceeded to set up their notice of possession.

This Hess triangle is only one of the many bits of property scattered here and there about Manhattan. Some years ago Brian G. Hughes, a paper-box manufacturer and practical joker, who died a few years ago, made announcement of the fact that he was going to deed over a site for a park to the city. He would not disclose the location of the park-to-be until dedication day, when in the presence of a large crowd that had been entertained by a band, he solemnly turned over the deed to a two-by-four bit of property to a pop-eyed city official. No attempt has been made, so far as I can discover, to carry out Mr. Hughes' injunctions that it be set out with trees, shrubs, flower beds, a band stand and benches. In Lilliputia the plot would have been a Central Park, but in Manhattan it would hardly serve as a breathing space for a subway sardine.

## Lost Chorders.

There was never a time when the demand for organists was so great as it is today in Manhattan. This is due to the great organs that are being installed in theaters and the desire of the wealthy to have them in their apartments and suburban homes. Organists of ability are receiving fancy fees for playing in private homes, and I am told of one whose fee is \$500 for an evening's performance. Several schools of the organ have come into being recently, and one, located on Broadway, keeps its big instrument going from 9 o'clock in the morning until almost midnight.

## A Jolt, Indeed.

A Vaudeville hoodlum, who had been an annoyance to his associates because of his eighteen-carat egotism, was given a large chunk of humility a few nights ago. The story was told me by two of his friends who witnessed his disgrace. A picture house on Washington Heights had advertised an amateur contest and invited all possessing talent for entertainment to enter for the prizes. The vaudevillian in a moment of bravado decided to enter the contest under an assumed name. On the night of the contest he joked and sang and danced at his best. He was dumbfounded to receive little applause and a good deal of heckling, and half in a trance at the reception he received he dashed from the theater and hopped into a cab for home without bothering to remove his make-up. His friends hope that the experience will have a salutary effect.