

Face-Lifting

Work Begun On Home For PM

By KAY REX

Ottawa, Dec. 12 (CP).—The hoarding is going up at 24 Sussex St., and pretty soon that grey stone mansion—the one to become the new residence of Canada's prime ministers—will be cased in. The structure is to get an \$80,000 fix-up job.

Armed with planks, a gang of construction workers moved in on the house today. Soon they will have 24 Sussex St. completely sheathed—cased—in planking, all three stories of it.

When it emerges from its wooden cocoon, this 83-year-old former residence of a Liberal senator and of a Conservative member of parliament, will have become a modern 17-room home for Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent and his successors.

Already workmen have dismantled the two huge crystal chandeliers in the dining room. The hundreds of pieces of glass have been wrapped separately in newspaper and stand in crates, awaiting storage.

The chandeliers will be used in the new dining room.

The great fixtures are reminiscent of the days when royalty visited in the luxurious old home.

Built in 1868 by Joseph Merrill Currier, Ottawa lumberman and Conservative member of parliament for the capital between 1867 and 1882, the house once was the scene of a great ball in honor of Prince Arthur of Connaught, who later as the Duke of Connaught was Canada's governor-general during the First World War.

Mr. Currier's grandson, Cyril Currier of Ottawa, says that on the occasion of the prince's visit in 1870, his grandfather added a ballroom to the building.

When Senator W. C. Edwards, a wealthy lumberman, bought the house at the turn of the century, he removed the ballroom and in its place built a long art gallery.

Now the gallery must go. It will be replaced by stone steps and a terrace overlooking the shrubbery covered banks of the Ottawa River, which are to be landscaped down to the water's edge.

A bulldozer already has cut a wide swathe in the ground to the right of the house where a brand new kitchen will be built, adjoining the dining room.

In the old kitchen, overlooking the river, there was ear-splitting noise today as workmen ripped out the cavernous wooden cupboards and partitions. This will become the living room, where the Prime Minister and Mrs. St. Laurent will do their entertaining.

In blueprint language, the room will be "20 by 31 feet"—or in other words a large living room.

The garage, which now sits to the left of the building, will be torn down, and the ground turned into a garden.

The new garage will be erected near a small grey stone house at the entrance to the spacious grounds, where the caretaker of 24 Sussex St. will live.