

Belleville, now	\$ 6,575 00
Galt, now	5,000 00
Brockville, now	4,950 00
St. Catharines in 1898	9,360 00
Chatham in 1898	5,165 00
Woodstock (now including \$514.42 for free water to some manufacturers)	6,734 42
Thanks to Mr. Monteith's committee and Mr. Chipman's report, Stratford is now about	4,000 00

This on a basis of such other places as Berlin, would be put up to at least \$6,500 and add to that excess of say \$2,500, loss of say \$1,800 of taxes and you will find where the taxation comes in. You would increase your load by \$4,300 a year, yet you are not to be taxed? It is quite clear testing this matter another way, that these hidden rates make the ownership a heavy load. Stratford's expenses for 1900 for Lighting, Water Supply and Fire Protection was only \$13,729. Every other Ontario city owns its water supply. Every one of them for these services far exceeds this. Most of them double. St. Thomas the model, \$26,182, just about double. Brantford, the other model \$45,811, more than treble.

If, it is said, this grows with number of hydrants, so much the worse. The taxes are increased thereby and for outsiders there is nothing in return. Even now it is for those beyond fire protection an iniquitous tax. This increases it. But most places take the high rate of \$50.00 per hydrant as basis. Ours is less than \$40.00 on an average.

The VanBuskirk report condemned the Huron and part of Erie street mains. Jones' report condemns 1,217 feet more. Chipman still more. A mile and a half of main charged for in by-law price must be dug up and replaced or one eighth of entire length. Yet you are asked to pay for this, as useless as the pumps and boilers, full value with increase for inflated values. Is it fair? Is it right to pay that and 10% in addition for engineering of such work?

Why have business men selected this inflated time to force this issue? They wouldn't think of making a *permanent investment* in say real estate or stocks when the market was at its highest point and sure to decline in a year or two as everyone with a business head recognizes prices of iron and labor will.

We can wait till the scrap iron is valued by a trustworthy guide, on its return to normal values.

If we pay \$30,000 more than we ought for this, how much more will these men lead you to give away to the Gas Co?

The Municipal Act, Sec. 550, Sub. Sec. 6, enables the Council to close the wells and force water on you willing or not, whether good or bad, without Board of Health.

Yours respectfully,
JOHN IDINGTON.

Stratford, February 27, 1903.