

OLD FIRE MARK IN VANCOUVER OFFICE

Mr. T. Leith Rettie, of the Royal Exchange, was good enough to supply us with the following interesting insurance historical note:

An interesting relic of fire insurance practice in the shape of a Fire Mark has come into the hands of Mr. A. C. Stirrett, General Agent of the Royal Exchange Assurance at Vancouver.

In the days when fire insurance was more or less of an experiment as compared with the present scientific method, these Fire Marks served a useful purpose of distinguishing the buildings which the company insured. The companies in those days also maintained their own fire brigades, the members of which received the princely salary of £30 per year and uniform. One of the principal duties pertaining to the office was to place the Fire Marks on the buildings which were insured by the company and attending and assisting to extinguish fires in the particular buildings in which their company was interested.

It was rather trying on the fire brigade of the different offices in those days as the desire to serve their own office best was their first consideration, and it is on record that if a fire occurred in buildings adjoining in which two different companies were interested, the spirit of mutual protection did not appeal to these officers, they simply put out the fire in the building which their Fire Mark was on.

It is interesting to note the various designs of these Fire Marks. Some of their particular designs signified the Coat-of-Arms or emblem of the office insuring and they were considered in those days very fair specimens of the brass-worker's art. The Fire Marks seem to have been a cause of some trouble to the Committee and the Court of Directors of the Royal Exchange, for on three consecutive days they had the subject before them. Thus we read from the minutes:

27 June, 1721. "Orderd that whenever more than one house be assured in a policy a Mark be set upon each House of different numbers and the several numbers specifid in the Policy."

28 June, 1721. "At a Court of Directors orderd that the Marks continue as they were first settled and that no Cerson have the Exchange Gilt on any account whatever."

29 June, 1721. "At a Court of Directors orderd that the charge of every Policy for assurance from Fire be Five shillings and every Mark Half a Crown. Orderd that every House assured shall have a Mark tho' several of them be included in the same Policy."

The Sun, the Hand-in-Hand, which emerged into the Commercial Union, the Phoenix and the Royal Exchange all had their particular marks about this period, but latterly commercial enterprise has grown to such an extent that the system had to be dispensed with and municipalities were made responsible for the safety of the inhabitants and property belonging to them, consequently municipal fire brigades were inaugurated and a charge made against the ratepayers. The Fire Mark in the course of time was discontinued, and it may now be regarded in the insurance field as a relic of prehistoric times.

LOCAL BANK MANAGER PROMOTED

Mr. Philip Vibert, manager of the Union Bank of Canada, in Vancouver, has been promoted to the position of inspector of western branches of the bank, with headquarters at Winnipeg. His successor will be Mr. J. G. Geddes, who has been inspector of eastern branches at Toronto.

Mr. Vibert came here May 31, 1912, as superintendent of British Columbia branches of the bank, and was appointed local manager on September 15 last year. Friends and business acquaintances are congratulating him on his well-deserved promotion. Their pleasure is coupled with regrets at his approaching departure as he has won a firm place in the esteem of the business community here during the past four and a half years.

RECENT FIRE LOSSES.

Recent fire losses reported to Superintendent of Insurance, Victoria:—

West Vancouver, Sept. 29.—Fourteenth Street; owner, Mrs. Mary Louise Wharton; occupants various—see below:

Seven dwellings and stores; value of building \$6,000, insurance on same \$2,500. Total loss, \$6,000. Cause unknown. Factories Insurance Company.

Occupants, Joseph & Edgett; store; value of contents \$1,200, insurance on same \$750; loss \$1,200; Nationale of Paris.

Occupant, J. Reynolds; tea room and store; value of contents \$2,500, insurance on same \$1,000; loss \$600. Caledonian.

Occupant, C. Lee; barber shop; value of contents \$450, insurance nil; loss \$40.

Occupant, Dr. Stainsby; dwelling and office; value of contents \$1,000, insurance nil; loss \$400.

Occupant, F. Webb; shoemaking shop; value of contents \$150, insurance nil; loss \$150.

Vancouver, Sept. 23.—Pier Tea Rooms, Beach Ave.; owner, Park Board, City of Vancouver; occupant, C. N. Lee; one-storey frame store building; value of building \$2,500, insurance on same \$1,500; value of contents \$10,000, insurance on same \$5,200. Total loss, \$2,270. Cause unknown. British American, Boston, Glens Falls, London Mutual, Nationale of Paris.

Burnaby, Oct. 6.—Holdom Ave., Capital Hill; owner and occupant, Sarah Large; wood dwelling; value of building \$300, insurance on same \$200; value of contents \$300, insurance on same \$200. Total loss, \$585. Cause, clothes hanging over stove. North Empire, Western Assurance.

Pitt Meadows, Oct. 12.—Sec. 34, Block 5, N. W. D.; wooden barn; value of building \$1,200, insurance on same \$500; value of contents \$2,500, insurance on same nil. Total loss, \$3,700. Cause, supposed incendiary. B. C. Mutual Fire Ins. Co.

Port Hammond, Oct. 13.—Dartford Street; owner, estate of O. J. Miller; occupant, J. J. Wilson; wooden poolroom; value of building \$300, insurance on same nil; value of contents \$700, insurance on same \$400. Total loss, \$1,000. Cause, adjoining. Aetna.

Port Hammond, Oct. 13.—Maple Crescent; owner and occupant, James M. Dale; wooden public hall; value of building \$12,000, insurance on same \$6,000; value of contents \$9,000, insurance on same \$6,000. Total loss, \$20,250. Cause unknown. Aetna, London & Lancashire.

Port Hammond, Oct. 13.—Maple Crescent; owner, Bank of Hamilton; occupants, Bank of Hamilton, E. W. Powell and Dr. Sutherland; value of building \$10,000, insurance on same not stated; value of contents \$1,200, insurance on same not stated. Total loss, \$10,600. Cause, adjoining. Insurance companies interested not stated.

Saanich, Oct. 8.—Prairie Hotel; owner, Enoch Sage; occupant, George Jenkins; frame stable, barns, sheds, and storehouse; value of buildings \$1,000, value of contents \$800; no insurance. Total loss, \$1,800. Cause unknown.

Victoria, Sept. 27.—424 David Street; owner, MacCarter Bros.; occupants, Adam Bros.; two-storey frame shingle mill; value of building \$2,500, insurance on same nil; value of contents \$6,000, insurance on same \$1,000. Total loss, \$8,500. Cause unknown. Queen's, National.

Vancouver, Oct. 1.—239 Lansdowne Street; owner, George Rathwell; occupant, F. H. Tomlin; two-storey frame dwelling; value of building \$2,000, insurance on same \$1,400; value of contents \$175, insurance on same nil. Total loss, \$365. Cause, defective chimney. Mount Royal.

GOVERNMENT TO ISSUE SHORT TERM BONDS.

To meet the desires of those investors who want their funds to be available for the war expenditures of the Government and who may have money on hand from time to time in the intervals between the war loan issues which they would like to invest safely and profitably, the Finance Department has created an issue of Dominion 5 per cent. treasury debenture stock, principal maturing October 1, 1919, with interest from date of purchase payable by cheque free of exchange. This stock may be purchased at par at any time and will be accepted by the Government at par and accrued interest in lieu of cash in payment of any allotment under future Canadian war loan issue.

Further particulars will be given in the advertisements which will shortly be published. This debenture stock issue which is intended to attract funds available for investment which might otherwise find their way into foreign securities, was forecasted in the last budget reports of the Minister of Finance. The issue is entirely distinct and separate from the war savings certificates of small denominations now under consideration for promoting national savings. It is hoped that from the sale of this debenture stock substantial further funds may be made available for the purchase of munitions and supplies in Canada.