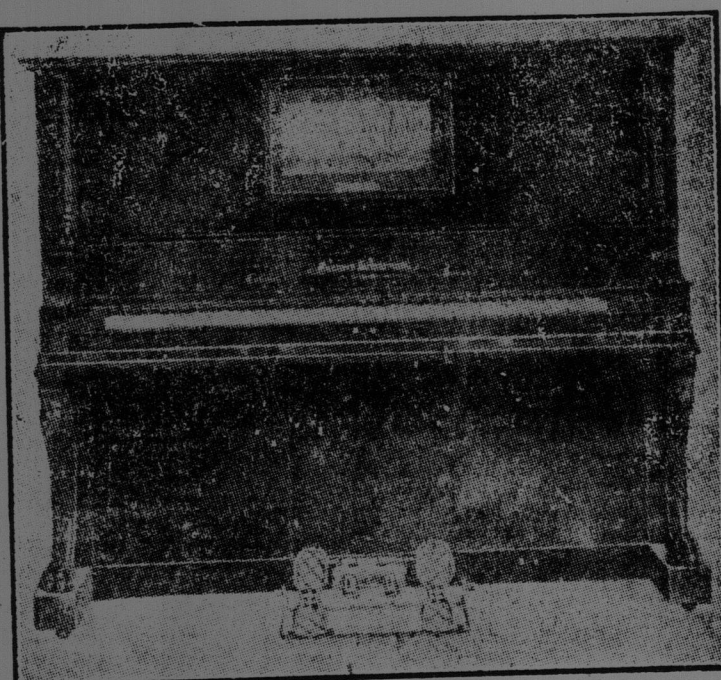


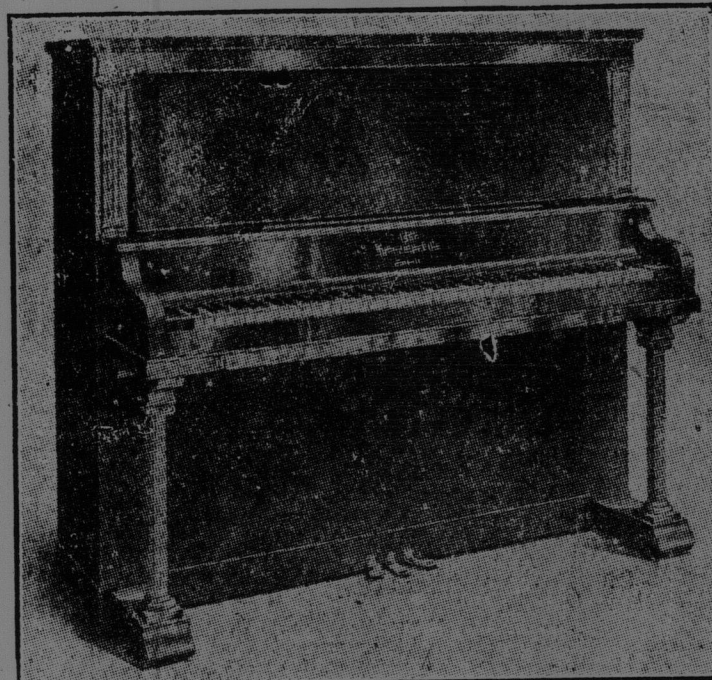
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SAFETY BOARD DECIDES TO PROBE THE FIRE DEPARTMENT SITUATION

The regular monthly meeting of the Safety Board, which was held yesterday afternoon, was indeed a lively one, the session being replete with cross-firing questions and forcible assertions. It all that was said at the meeting concerning the conditions prevalent in the fire department, the service is indeed worthy an examination under oath.

The lowest tender for the erection of the proposed West Side engine house was in excess of the appropriation, and the matter was referred back to the council. Other business of lesser importance followed and was disposed of, after which the Shannon case received over an hour's attention, during which time heated arguments were in order. The matter was brought up by Ald. Potts, after which Chief Kerr spoke at some length, defending his position. Ald. Wilson also spoke on the subject, also a feature of the day. The argument resulted in Ald. Potts' motion, which was carried, to have the whole fire department investigated under oath.

The chairman, Ald. Vanwart, presided and besides the members of the board there were present: Common Clerk Wardrop, Director Wisely, P. Neil Brodie, Chief Kerr and the building inspector.

At the opening of the meeting Ald. Scully asked that Clark and Adams tender for the erection of the West Side engine house be withdrawn at their request.

The tenders for the building of the

engine house were then opened. They were as follows:
Building, glazing, etc.—G. R. Craig, \$439; Jas. B. Pullen, \$290.
Plumbing, etc.—Jeremiah Buckley, \$305; Wm. E. Emmerson, \$289; F. E. McManus, \$270.
Mason work and excavation—J. H. Hurley, \$1,960; B. Mooney and Sons, \$1,800.
W. A. Steiner and Co. tendered to do the galvanizing iron work and steel ceiling for \$288; S. A. Williams tendered for the labor and material, according to carpenter's specifications, for \$1,650; A. E. Hamilton offered to build the station complete for \$6,010; Ernest W. Green tendered for the woodwork, galvanizing iron and sheet metal work, also cast and wrought iron work for \$2,215; J. H. Hatch tendered to do the work complete for \$10,817. A few tenders were assigned to the waste-paper basket, as they lacked the required check.

After some discussion on the matter it was agreed to hand the tenders to Mr. Brodie and allow him to consider the matter and make a recommendation thereon.

The director then read a communication from Lieut. E. S. Hill, asking why certain encroachments were made on the land known as the Fort Howe Reserve. The police building, the old electric light house, now used by the Board of Public Works, property leased to Dr. Maher and a couple of small buildings are situated on the above property.

Ald. Potts thought that the city had

nothing to do with the sheds. Mr. Wardrop stated that the city had a lease of Fort Howe from the Dominion government, paying \$50 a year for same.

Ald. Kelley moved that the correspondence be sent to the Minister of Public Works for consideration.—Carried.

A communication from Peter Clinch on behalf of the N. B. Fire Underwriters was then read. Objection was taken to a shed built in the Matthews' alley, on Charlotte street, and the roofing on the Riddick property.

Ald. Sprout moved that the shed in the Matthews' alley, in the rear of No. 2 engine house, be referred to the inspector for consideration, and that he report before Monday.—Carried.

A similar motion was passed concerning the latter objection.

A letter from Wm. Ellis was then read, in which he asked for a renewal lease of the leasehold property No. 40, corner of Pitt and Mecklenburg streets. The man from whom the property was purchased is dead and the city has no record of the lease. It was decided to lay the communication on the table until proper title could be shown.

The director was empowered to have a new floor built in the North End police station, at a cost not exceeding \$25.

A communication was read from Mrs. M. H. Kingston, in which she offered to buy the house known as the Nelson property in Fairview for \$30 and pay \$16 ground rental. The director recommended that the offer be accepted, and after some discussion the recommendation was on motion adopted.

Mr. Kennedy was given a seven year renewal lease of a lot on Rodney street, West End, at \$1 per year.

The resignation of E. Percy Howard from the Salvage Corps was accepted.

Mr. Brodie then recommended that A. E. Hamilton's tender, \$6,010 for the complete work, be accepted. The estimate cost was \$4,750, but the changing of the lot made a difference of \$1,260 to \$1,200. Mr. Brodie stated that the work could not be cut down any.

In answer to Ald. Kelley, Director Wisely stated that the former lot had been leased, and the lease executed, hence the change of lot.

Ald. Scully moved that the council be asked to accept the lowest tender and the Treasury Board furnish the funds.—Carried.

The monthly pay roll, \$969.69 was then passed by the board.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Ald. Potts then brought up the matter of the fire department discipline, making a particular reference to the case in which Frank Shannon was transferred from No. 4 to No. 3 station. He felt rather interested in this particular case. He said that the papers had commented on the attempt of the Safety Board to override the author-

ties of the chief. He thought that the matter was very unfairly put before the public. He asked that Chief Kerr be asked to state his reason for the transfer.

Ald. Kelley referred to a case which was before the council a year or so ago, but Ald. Potts stated that he was not particularly interested in what happened in the council when he was not a member.

Chief Kerr then commenced a heated and lengthy argument. He stated he desired to give a full account of the case, as he thought he was not as bad as he was painted to be.

There was an act passed in 1878, which gave the chief absolute control of the firemen without referring to the Common Council although appointed by them. He then referred to the time when Recorder Dr. Jack ruled against this, giving the council the power of control. Recorder Skinner later thought that the council still had the control, and about 1896 the chief was once again given the absolute control of the department, and was subject to dismissal by the council.

He then stated that he was endeavoring to do the work in the interests of the people and according to the wishes of the council. He would not put Shannon back until he would make his peace with the foreman of the company. The position he held, he said, was one of continual trouble, and he didn't care if he lost it or not. If he was dismissed when doing his duty he was satisfied. Ald. Vanwart, he said, asked him to put Shannon back and save trouble for himself. This he refused to do, as it was not in the interests of the people. Now, he said, the matter was again brought up, by whom he knew not, but he had his suspicions.

He intimated that Ald. Potts was the one who first brought the matter up this time, and had been urged by some one also to do so.

Ald. Wilson—"You're making an insinuation you cannot prove."

Chief Kerr continued: "Shannon asked me to put him back and I said I would not. Let him deny that if he will. The reason for the change was that something had to be done in No. 4 company, and I thought the best thing was to separate the men in order to have peace restored. Shannon is a good fireman, he said, but there he will remain as far as I am concerned."

Ald. Wilson thought that Shannon was transferred so that he would have no chance of promotion.

Ald. Potts—"Sure he was."

Chief Kerr—"I say no."

Ald. Wilson—"Has there not been a promotion of any substitutes since Shannon went to No. 3?"

The chief was not certain and asked Ald. Wilson to name the men.

Ald. Wilson—"No, I do not want to get any man into trouble."

The chief stated that Shannon was first class man and understood electrical work.

Ald. Potts—"Why did you make a pick of Frank Shannon?"

THE RINGLEADER

Chief Kerr—Because he was the ringleader, and after he was there was peace.

Ald. Wilson—"Why did you and

Foreman Bond go around this morning in your wagon and appeal to every alderman?"

Chief Kerr—"I did not."

Ald. Wilson—"You were at Ald. Potts' house with Mr. Bond."

Ald. Kelley thought somebody was lying and the matter should be proven. If the chief is lying to the board I would move that he be dismissed.

The chief thought that the men should be brought in to prove the matter.

Chief Kerr (to Ald. Potts)—"I supported you and I'm sorry for it, I will never do it again."

Ald. Potts—"I came in a free man and will work in the interests of the people."

Ald. Wilson stated that he understood that Chief Kerr was acting the crazy among the firemen. Instead he should be loved by them if he was satisfied.

Chief Kerr stated that he thought they had shown their appreciation by presenting him with things he had never expected. "I am not going to beat them in a measly way," he said. "I speak hastily and I know it, but I am sorry, I think when any complaints were investigated I was found to be in the right. I am the first to say I am sorry, the trait which is in my character and which I inherit from my father. If the council were to request me to put him back I would say, 'No, I cannot and will not put him back,' and would that they realize that Shannon was a good man and now he was in a place where he had to respond only to a second alarm. He thought he should be in a place in the central part of the city, where he could use his ability which he has already shown that he possessed."

Ald. Potts—"Do you report always when you make a charge?"

Chief—"Yes."

Ald. Potts—"Was there not a man by the name of Taylor discharged in No. 4 or 5 station about a month ago?"

Chief—"Yes."

Ald. Potts—"Then why didn't you report that to the board?"

Chief—"I was just going to now."

Ald. Potts—"No, I am going to do the talking now." He then read from a morning paper about Shannon being recommended for his bravery at the Canterbury street fire. Ald. Potts continued, saying that Foreman Bond had over ridden the authority of the chief. He knew there was a better man than himself in the company. Therefore he said, "Cut his head off." You asked Bond if he wanted Shannon away and he said "Yes," and you transferred him.

Chief Kerr—"I did not say it, and I throw it in your face."

Ald. Potts—"It doesn't hurt me very badly. There is hardly a man in the Common Council, he continued, whom you have not button-holed. You have done it with every member of the Safety Board with the exception of myself."

Aldermen Kelley and Vanwart stated that nothing was spoken to them by the chief.

Ald. Potts said that he was sure that there were six who were button-holed by the chief. Ald. Potts continued,

saying that the chief should be proud of Shannon, as he was one of the best men in the whole department, but the chief and Bond would not give him a chance to shine.

Alderman Potts here suggested that Mr. Kerr be asked to retire from the meeting.

Ald. Kelley thought that Shannon should be given a hearing.

Mr. Shannon was sent for.

Chairman Vanwart here stated that the report in Monday's Standard, stating that he called on Mr. Bond, was incorrect.

Chief Kerr stated that the chief had sought his aid in the appeals committee.

Chief Kerr asked that Mr. Bond be sent for. This was also done.

While the two men were being summoned, the matter of clearing away the rubbish at the foot of Duke street was brought up. The Board of Health had taken objection to it. The director was authorized to have the place cleaned, at a cost of about \$100.

The chairman, Ald. Vanwart, was of the opinion that the meeting was not the proper place to fight out the fire department question. There should be a Kerr investigation held.

Ald. Hayes was of the same opinion.

Chief Kerr thought it better for some person to make a direct charge against Chief Kerr, and then hold an investigation into the charge.

At this point Chief Kerr and Messrs. Shannon and Bond were asked to retire.

The chairman thought the matter should be disposed of by holding an investigation under oath, if anything were done to rescind the action of the chief, without this he could fight it.

Ald. Potts—"He could fight in law better than he could fight a fire."

Some discussion then took place, in which Ald. Potts intimated that there were other serious charges to be made, such as that of the No. 4 Company men taking liquor into the station, and that of the chief not reporting resignations when they were made to him, because a member was a relative or a

friend, and could draw pay when not in the department.

The result of the whole argument was the following motion, made by Ald. Potts and carried unanimously: That an investigation of the whole fire department be held under oath, with a view of betterment in the service for the citizens."

During the meeting Ald. Potts strongly intimated that Chief Kerr was an incapable and unfit man for the position, and others in the department were far more suited for the office.

SHOOTS GIRL, THEN SUICIDES

MONTREAL, July 24.—John Smith, or Schmidt, who came here from New York a few weeks ago, tonight shot and probably fatally wounded Marie Misset at her home in St. Henri Ward, and then turning the revolver upon himself, committed suicide. Schmidt wanted to marry the girl, but she refused. Tonight he called to say goodbye, saying that he was going back to New York. He appeared quite rational when the young woman's sister was in the room, but as soon as she left he opened fire on Miss Misset, wounding her in the back and then putting a shot through his brain. The young woman was removed to the Western Hospital, where she now lies in a precarious condition.

It is pretty safe to say that extensively advertised goods have merit.—Hon. Elijah A. Morse, "Rising Sun Stove Polish."

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