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City Debt and Local Improvements Act

Comparison of St. John and Other Cities

OUR DEBT THE SMALLEST

Placed at \$91 a Head of Population—Very High Percentage of Debt in Some Canadian Cities Carried by Property Owners Instead of City

The extent to which the plan of taxing property owners for local improvements, such as permanent pavements, etc., is in vogue in other Canadian cities is indicated by a statement recently compiled and which is given herewith.

In some places a very high percentage of the total civic debt is carried in this way. Apart from the theory that this form of taxation places the burden more directly on the persons who benefit by the improvements for which the money has been spent, there is the fact that it keeps the general tax rate at a low figure. This is especially desirable from the standpoint of the citizen who is not a property owner and also is a valuable asset in attracting new residents and new industries.

In St. Boniface, Man., forty-two per cent of the total debt is charged to local improvements and is carried by the property owners instead of by the city corporation. In Three Rivers, P. Q., the local improvement debt is thirty-eight per cent of the total; in Victoria, B. C., it is thirty-three per cent and in St. Catharines, Ont., it is thirty-six per cent. In the twenty-four other cities listed in which this system prevails the average proportion of the debt charged to local improvements is eighteen per cent. In St. John it is less than one-third of one per cent.

While the statement shows no local improvement debt in Halifax, this is said to be due to the fact that the amount of work carried out for under this system had been paid for and so wiped off the slate. Halifax is second in the amount of work carried out, however, and on a paving contract recently entered into at a cost of \$60,000, an amount of \$496 for each man, woman and child in St. John's debt the smallest.

Comparisons afforded by the statement are of interest also as showing the extremely small bonded debt in St. John, in proportion to that carried by most of the other places mentioned. The striking differences are found in the comparison between the debt of St. John and that of western cities. In this connection it must be borne in mind also that, as an older city, St. John has paid off many bonded issues and it is probable that her assets are considerably larger in proportion to her debt than is the case in the newer communities.

St. John stands lowest in the entire list, with a bonded debt of only \$91 per head of population, while Port Arthur, Ont., holds the record with a debt of \$496 for each man, woman and child in the community.

Table with 2 columns: City, Debt per capita. Lists cities like Quebec, Three Rivers, Westmount, etc., with their respective debt per capita values.

WHEN ST. JOHN WAS IN GRIP OF THE FIRE FIEND

Next Friday Anniversary of Conflagration of 1877

FORTY TWO YEARS AGO

Millions in Property Loss and 21 Lives Sacrificed as City Was Swept—Thousand of People Rendered Homeless

Next Friday, June 20, will mark the forty-second anniversary of the great fire in St. John, during the course of which 800 acres or more than two-fifths of the entire city were laid in ruins, and damage estimated then at \$27,000,000.

In all 1,612 houses were destroyed and 2,709 families, representing a population of more than 13,000 people rendered homeless. The total mileage of streets laid waste was about nine and six-tenths miles. The area destroyed is that enclosed roughly in a line drawn from the corner of North and Mill streets, along Mill street, Dock street, King street and King street east to Pitt street, down Pitt street to the water's edge and then around the southern end of the city and the harbor front to the starting point.

The start was at 2:30 p. m. on June 20, 1877, that the fire broke out in the Joseph Fairweather building, York Point. A fierce north-west wind was blowing at the time and the flames spread with alarming rapidity. Immense brands and spears were cast for miles, and within half an hour after the alarm was sounded by E. Lantaulin, the city was burning like a bonfire. The fire spread from the starting point to Casleton, while the flames worked without ceasing; so great was the headway of the flames that water seemed not to effect them.

Both sides of Mill street caught at once and house after house was destroyed right to Market square. At the corner that Market square vicinity was a seething mass of old barracks in the lower cove were also burning fiercely. The people were driven from street to street in front of the flames, horror showing on their blanched faces. Many then escaped to Casleton, while others fled to the out-lying districts. The business men of the city gathered together all their papers and valuables and placed them in the vaults of the Bank of New Brunswick, many of them just in time before the fire consumed the body of the bank building and razed it.

The northern reach of the blaze had been stopped at North street, but it lost no time in working its way along Water street to Ward street and Tilton's alley and up King street, taking everything in its way, including the old Masonic Hall which stood on the corner of King and Charlotte streets. The building was erected in 1816 but was turned into a hotel, known as the St. John Hotel in 1837, and was the first hotel in St. John.

From Foster's corner the fire worked its way along Germain street, attacking first the steeple and then the body of old Trinity church, built in 1791. Everything was lost except the communion plate and the royal arms taken from Boston to Halifax in 1776 and brought to St. John in 1791. The "Old Custody Shop" was the next place of interest to fall a victim and it was followed a short time later by the old German street Methodist church (1808) at the corner of Horsfield street, and the Academy of Music.

As Hiram Sees It

Important Part Played By Officers and Men of 3rd C. G. A.

VETERAN OFFICIAL VERY ILL

It is perhaps not generally realized the important part played by maritime province artillerymen, and especially St. John men and officers in the great events transpiring in France and Belgium during the years of 1918. It is not commonly known that "regulators" of the 3rd C. G. A. here, as well as those who enrolled with it later, were in almost every battery of artillery among the Canadians, some with one, a few with another, but none containing almost entirely St. John men and officers.

It is worth noting the part played by the officers and men from the 3rd New Brunswick Regiment (C. G. A.) in the development of the C. G. A. in France. Out of about thirty-two major who were members of the C. G. A. at the time of the armistice, out of the fourteen battalions were commanded by St. John officers. At this time also several of the captains in these battalions were St. John men, as well as many of the subalterns. Another striking feature is the fact that of Major (now Lieut.-Colonel) Migney's subaltern officers, ten have served as captains in the C. G. A. and of these ten six received their majority. When the Nova Scotia and P. E. Island contingents were taken into account it will be seen that the maritime province element was practically predominant.

At the beginning of the war the establishment of a division called for three brigades of eighteen-pound guns and one heavy battery, Colchester type. The need for many more guns of heavy calibre was immediately felt and the 3rd C. G. A. (Royal Garrison Artillery) was formed from time to time as fast as guns could be made. Batteries, both siege and heavy, "The Howies" were sent out in the form of companies. The C. G. A. (Canadian Garrison Artillery) was formed from the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th siege batteries; the 2nd Brigade, composed of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th siege batteries of this city, composed of the 2nd, 4th, 5th and 6th siege and the 1st and 2nd heavy batteries and the 2nd Brigade, commanded by Lieut.-Colonel Farnell, D. S. O., of Halifax, and composed of the 8th, 10th, 11th and 12 siege batteries.

For the first seven months after the 1st division went to France the history of the C. G. A. is the history of the 1st Heavy. In the fall of 1915 the 2nd Heavy appeared on the scene. The 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th siege batteries came out in the form of companies in 1916. Up to this time all these batteries operated with R. G. A. formed, the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th siege batteries of the 1st Brigade headquarters was organized, the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th siege batteries of the 1st Brigade headquarters were formed, the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th siege batteries of the 1st Brigade headquarters were formed.

At King square the fire split, one wing going up Leinster street and the other working its way towards the court house. The court house withstood the attack, although all the houses about No. 2 fire station and behind the jail were reduced to ashes. The jail was saved, but the old Temperance Hall, which stood beside it, went down. The registry office was saved. The two wings of fire joined again at the old poor house in Carmarthen street, and the office of the superintendent of water supply and the St. John Meteorological Observatory were enveloped and destroyed, but not before the instruments, charts, and plans had been removed to a place of safety. Leinster street Baptist church (1861) across the street, went next and then the Varley Wesleyan Day School. The fire worked its way through to the rear of Centenary Chapel (1829) at the corner of Princess and Wentworth streets and it was not long before this edifice too had crumbled in ashes.

Artillerymen From Here Had Big Share In War

Important Part Played By Officers and Men of 3rd C. G. A.

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Will Not Help To Blockade Germany

GROGERS ON THE COST OF LIVING

Toronto Retailers' Testimony Before House of Commons Committee

Ottawa, June 13—Several Toronto retail grocers, who gave evidence this afternoon before the special committee of the commons on the cost of living, agreed in saying that, while the profits are lower than they were before the war, the manufacturers and wholesalers still continue to make good profits.

They complained because they cannot purchase certain articles direct from the manufacturers as they were permitted to do a few years ago. This, they said, was due to the fact that the grocers' guild had put on the screws and would not allow the manufacturers to sell direct to the retail trade.

Mr. Clark, who said that he employs a staff of ten, asserted that during the last three years he had made no net profit because of the high expense involved in carrying on business. A few years ago when prices were lower it had been possible to make money, but conditions had changed.

Mr. Burns, a Dundas street grocer, said that it had not been possible to buy canned goods from independent packers during the last two or three years because they sell direct to the wholesalers. Mr. S. Fielding asked what the effect would be if the duty was taken off canned goods.

"Prices would be lower," replied the witness. One witness went over a list of Toronto prices for February furnished by the department of labor, and declared in almost every instance that they were lower than dealers were compelled to make available at the time in order to make a living.

TEN ST. JOHN MEN HOME FROM WAR THIS MORNING

Several members of the 4th Divisional Train and other units reached the city this morning from Halifax, where they landed yesterday from the S. S. Olympic.

Among the list were Privates T. F. O'Brien, 5 Erin street; J. J. McNulty, 233 Sydney street; N. J. Speedy, 99 Elliott Row; C. Collins, 108 Spaw Cove Road; G. C. Jones, Canterbury street; J. P. McNamara, Prospect Road; E. G. Garvey, 277 Carmarthen street; E. Hastings, 4 Millidge street; P. Neal, West St. John, and Lionel McIntyre, Colchester street. All are receiving a hearty greeting.

Besides these men for the city there were G. D. Northrup, Nauwigswaak; J. D. Northrup, Quispamsis; A. L. Hober, Upper Gasquet; P. Spencer, O. Burke, and W. J. Thompson, Apponaque, N. B.

Halifax, N. S., June 14—The Eudist Fathers have been informed of the death of their venerable superior-general, Right Rev. Amge D. Dore, who passed away last Sunday, June 13, at the age of 89. He made his first visit to Halifax in 1830, when Archbishop O'Brien requested him to establish the seminary in Quispamsis road. It was erected by M. E. Keefe. His last visit was in 1910.

Halifax Building. The value of building construction work for which permits were granted during May to the end of June, 1919, was \$270,000, a plate mill at the shipyards. The total value of work this year for which permits were issued up to the end of May was \$1,411,246. In May of last year the value of such work was \$298,940 and for the year up to the end of that month \$718,106.

At the time of the armistice two heavy batteries were in training in England, and if the war had continued these would probably have been several more. The reason why the development of the C. G. A. was retarded has not been made known, though it has been stated that the government considered the cost an insurmountable item.

Many friends will regret to hear of the death of Harry Blacklock which occurred this morning in the General Public Hospital after a short illness. The young man underwent an operation for appendicitis only a week ago, but peritonitis developed and he grew weaker until this morning, when death occurred.

Mr. Blacklock leaves to mourn his wife, his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Blacklock, of East St. John, two brothers, Fred and George, the latter who has recently returned from overseas, and four sisters, Mrs. Frederick Coles, of Red Head, and Misses Louise, Hazel and Jennie, at home. He was a very popular young man and will be missed by a large circle of friends. The funeral will take place on Monday afternoon at three o'clock from the residence of his father-in-law, Louis Beckebrecht, East St. John.

Holland Joins Other Neutrals

Revising of the Peace Treaty—Some of the Changes of Important Nature—Reported British Bombardment of Bolshevik Base at Kronstadt

PEACE MATTERS IN PARIS

New York, June 13—The Associated Press tonight issued the following: The Council of Four devoted both its sessions on Friday to revision of the text of the peace treaty, preparatory to its presentation to the German peace delegates. Premier Orlando of Italy was not present, having left for Rome Thursday night to discuss at a secret meeting of the Italian parliament the work of the peace conference and to reach a decision on some important matters in particular with regard to military precautions on the Colchian front.

Baron Sonnino, foreign minister, represented Italy at Friday's meetings in place of the premier. The re-writing of the treaty of peace, as announced in Paris despatches, was rendered necessary by the discovery of errors and inconsistencies in the draft as first presented to the Germans. Many of the changes to be made are of a highly important nature, but most of them are of a minor character. The latter is particularly true of the reparations clauses, which will be virtually unchanged in the new draft. But the financial provisions will be amended so that the reparations committee will be given discretion to allow Germany to gather a working capital for the resumption of her industries in order that she may meet the requirements of the Allies.

The plebiscite in Silesia and changes in the Polish frontier necessitate new clauses, while a revised draft of the provisions on the Danish frontiers is expected. Holland has joined Sweden, Norway, Sweden and Denmark in refusing to take part in a blockade against Germany, while the latter refuse to sign the peace treaty.

British warships are reported in a despatch from Stockholm to be bombarding the base of the Bolsheviks at Kronstadt. The despatch intimates that the Bolsheviks are endeavoring to evacuate the base.

Paris, June 14—The drafting committee completed the work of framing a letter covering the reply to the German counter-proposals. It recalls that the principles upon which the treaty is based are such as to prejudice the Allies from making fundamental concessions.

CHINESE CABINET RESIGNS Peking, June 14—In consequence of difficulties created by popular movement against pro-Japanese members of the government, the cabinet resigned and President Hsu-Shih also intimated that he intended to quit office.

BEAVERBROOK TO TOUR PROVINCE Halifax, N. S., June 13—Lord Beaverbrook, who arrived on the Olympic today, proposed at once taking a motor trip through New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. He will be accompanied by W. D. Ross, of Toronto. His lordship is in Canada for his health and his motor trip has been arranged with that in view.

FOCH SENDS ULTIMATUM TO HUNS

Coblentz, June 14—An ultimatum demanding the immediate continuation of the movement of Polish troops across Germany has been sent the German government by Marshal Foch, according to despatches received here from Spa.

An order was issued at Berlin several days ago to hold up Polish troops in the interior of Germany. Transfer of Polish troops from France to Poland began about six weeks ago and was due to be completed on June 17.

Stern Measures By Next Saturday If Germans Do Not Sign

Paris, June 14—Confidence was expressed last night by the British, French and American delegations that the reply to the German counter-proposals will be delivered to the Germans on Monday, with the provision that they be given two days in which to answer. With three days of grace before the armistice is suspended there would be a resumption of hostilities on Saturday, June 21, if the Germans refuse to sign.

TRIBUTES TO DR. ALWARD

The members of the St. John Law Society met in the equity court rooms this morning at 11 o'clock to pay a tribute of respect to the late Sir Alward, M. A., D. C., one of the oldest members of the society, whose death occurred on Thursday. Dr. J. Roy Campbell presided and a resolution expressing their appreciation of his long and honorable career, their recognition of his scholarship and literary attainments and his services as a member of the legislature, their sense of loss and sympathy with his family was adopted. Members of the student body of the St. John Law School, of which Dr. Alward was dean for many years, are sending a wreath as a mark of their respect and esteem.

The funeral of Dr. Alward, R.C., will take place this afternoon at 3:30. Service in St. John's (Stone) church will be conducted by Rev. G. A. Kurling and interment will be made in Fernhill cemetery. Many beautiful wreaths and flowers were received from friends and organizations in the city and throughout the province.

THIRTY-THREE MARRIAGES SO FAR

Since the beginning of June thirty-three marriages have been performed in the city, according to the records of the registrar of marriages, and of these only four are recorded as having taken place this week.

LIGHT OBSCURED

A message has been received by the board of trade that the signal station light on Briar Island has become obscured by trees so that it is not wholly visible from the sea. The information has been passed along by the secretary of the board to the department of marine and fisheries.

GIRLS IN THE MAJORITY The births of fourteen children were registered with the local registrar of births this week. Of these the female sex led by an overwhelming majority, claiming a full dozen of the new citizens, while the best that the opposition could muster was a lone pair.