

## CHAPTER VII.

*A Valuable Chairman, Benjamin Cowderoy, J.P.—Notable Councillors, Hon. James McCulloch—Hon. Simon Fraser, M.L.C.—the Hon. Sir George Turner—St. Kilda's Isolation—First Council By-laws—Prayer for Water Pipe, 1852—South Yarra Water Works Service, 1855—To St. Kilda—The Company's Unpopularity—A Court Case—Agitation for Yan Yean Water Service—A Permanent Spring—St. Kilda Club House Hotel on Fire—Remarkable Circumstances—St. Kilda Fire Brigade—The Fire Brigades Act 1890—St. Kilda's New Fire Brigade Station.*

**I**N the first years of its being, the municipal Council of St. Kilda was fortunate in having for its Chairman Benjamin Cowderoy, 1857-58, and also in the year 1861. For five years afterwards, he held the office of a municipal councillor of St. Kilda. He gave his valuable services to the ratepayers at a difficult time—at a time when municipal legislation was in its experimental stages. When he was the secretary of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce (1852), he was regarded by the merchant members as one of the guiding lights of the commercial world of Melbourne. Again, take the case of a notable man, who sat at the Council Chamber with Cowderoy in the years 1862 to 1864, the Hon. James, afterwards Sir James, McCulloch, K.C.M.G., and who was the Premier of the Colony in 1863. Nearer to our own times, St. Kilda Council had as a member, Councillor George Turner, who was schooled in public business through his experience in the St. Kilda Council. The high offices to which he attained both in State and Federal Parliaments, form a portion of the political history of Australia. These men are among several of the St. Kilda councillors who rose to parliamentary and civic distinctions. St. Kilda Council has never wanted for men with administrative ability and common sense, and the result of their corporate labors is seen in what St. Kilda City is to-day.

Many times in the world's history it has happened that the human overflow of vigorous expanding cities has advanced over intervening fields, and absorbed villages, changing their status from villages to towns, until, in time, the microcosmic cities have swallowed them up, leaving little more than the villages' names to recall to those, who are born long after the time when the absorption took place, that hereabouts, in the hearts of the cities, were once villages that the cities have made a part of their expanding radius. The "village of St. Kilda" has not since the days of its municipal emancipation, had the sanctuary of its isolation invaded by any such extensions of the City of Melbourne. Unlike some of the suburbs to the north, and northeast, of the boundaries of Melbourne, St. Kilda, lying south of the river Yarra, will retain its character, since the city has become Victoria's metropolitan watering place.

Merchants, and members of the professional classes, who had made St. Kilda their abiding places, represented a very fair proportion of the leading men of Melbourne. Possessing them, the status of St. Kilda was unique among the other municipalities of Melbourne, and the isolated position of St. Kilda became of importance, since it imparted a community interest that was warmly fostered. The residents were very loyal to the spirit of St. Kilda, or rather to the local spirit they created. They made a compact group that had not its likeness in any suburb around Melbourne. If St. Kilda Councils did not lead the clannish spirit, they at least fostered a desire in the residents' hearts for the St. Kilda Council to enhance the beauties of the municipality. From the days when the councillors took up the burden of their honorable office, we find them anxious to lay down ornamental plantations, and also they are busy asking the Government to plant its Crown park lands, to the north of Fitzroy Street, with suitable trees.

During the first half year of its being, the Council received ten petitions from "ratepayers, residents and householders." The majority of the petitions had reference to imperfect drainage. One petition, from some of the inhabitants of Alma Road, complaining of the Council's system of drainage, and the formation of Alma Road, was returned to the petitioners because it was considered to be discourteous in its wording to the Council.

A list of the first by-laws passed by the St. Kilda Council, and which by-laws were in force in the year 1857, is given in the Council's first half-yearly report. The report states the following:—

"To regulate by means of Standing Orders, the proceedings of the Municipal Council." Assented to 9th April.

"For the appropriation of £2,500, being the first instalment granted out of the public revenues for the Municipal District." Not assented to till after the expiry of the half-year.

"For imposing a rate of 1/- in the pound on the rateable property of the Municipal District for the current year." Assented to 26th May.

"To empower the Municipal Council to stop or close against public traffic, any street, roadway, or footpath during the progress of the works." (No. 5.) Assented to 5th June.

"For the regulation and government of sea-bathing on the sea coast." (No. 7.) Assented to 3rd July.

"For the regulation and government of building operations, and the licensing of Builders." (No. 9.) Assented to 17th July.

"For the regulation and government of Nightmen." (No. 10.) Assented to 17th July.

"For preventing damage to public Footpaths and Water Courses, and for regulating the formation of private Drains and Crossings." (No. 11.) Assented to 3rd July.

"For the regulation of Water Carriers." (No. 12.) Assented to 11th September.

By-law No. 7 is the forerunner of several such regulations. It contains the germ of a practice that has remained more or less under changing conditions, controversial to this day. The "regulations of water carriers" recall the days when the want of an adequate supply of fresh water was a source of anxiety to the residents of early St. Kilda. Attempts were made very early in the history of the village to obtain a permanent service of water. In the official statement of the Votes of Proceedings of the Legislative Council, issued before the days of Responsible Government and of the parliamentary recorder, "Hansard," there is a note made on Friday, 13th August, 1852, which states :—

"WATER PIPES TO ST. KILDA.—Mr. Miller moved pursuant to notice, that an address be presented to His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor, praying His Excellency to cause a branch pipe to be laid down from the main water pipe to the Beach, such branch pipe to commence at, or near, the Emerald Hill, and to be laid down to St. Kilda, in order that that rising town, and its neighbourhood, may be supplied with fresh water from the river Yarra Yarra."

"Debate ensued."

"Question—put and negatived."

The Morning Herald newspaper, of that date, states that the reason why the question was negatived was, that it was "considered inconsistent that such a locality should be supplied with water, whilst Melbourne, and Geelong, containing such a vast number of inhabitants were left to shift for themselves. It was elicited from the Colonial Secretary that the subject had already occupied the attention of the Government, but from the plans that had been prepared a difficulty presented itself with regard to the levels. It was urged on the Representatives side of the House that the work when undertaken should be at the cost of the territorial revenue as the Government lands in the neighbourhood of St. Kilda would be greatly enhanced in value by an adequate supply of water being brought to the spot."

The "Beach" referred to in the official note is now called Port Melbourne; the name of "Liardet's Beach" was no longer in general usage. The main water pipe service, "at, or near the Emerald Hill," was for use of ship masters, and others, at the Beach.

St. Kilda residents were dependent for their water supplies upon rain water they were lucky enough to catch, and to conserve in iron tanks, or in bricked underground tanks, of which quite a number was in use. This rain water was supplemented by water brought to St. Kilda, in barrels, from the river Yarra, by a group of men who formed a little guild-like nest to advance their own interests, that was the price of water. These water carriers, their high prices, and their impudent independence, became so annoying to the householders, who had to trade with them, that they protested against the tyranny, and exploitation they were daily subjected to. In the end, as a result of the residents' indignation, a deputation, representing the inhabitants of St. Kilda, Windsor and North Brighton, led by the Hon. F. S. Chapman. M.L.C., and Messrs. A. S. Wheatley, John Mackenzie, and S. Toynbee, waited on the Governor, Sir Charles Hotham, on October 8, 1855, and asked him to grant a portion of the Police Reserve, at St. Kilda, to the South Yarra Water Works Company, as a site for a fountain, or water tank, wherefrom the residents of St. Kilda could draw their supplies of water. The South Yarra Water Works Company had a pumping station, placed high on Forrest Hill, at the corner of

Chapel and Church Street bridge, between South Yarra and Richmond. The company's water main reached south to where now the railway bridge crosses Chapel Street, South Yarra. The deputation desired that the water main might be extended from its Chapel Street stand pipe to the St. Kilda Junction, where it was to terminate with a St. Kilda water stand pipe placed upon the Police angular reserve, that was a portion of the police station "barracks," at the Junction. This old, and forgotten, police reserve is shown on a map, compiled by James Kearney, in the years 1856-7. The deputation for the water stand pipe was so far successful that the Governor, acting under the advice of the Surveyor-General, granted to the company a triangular plot of ground, situated between the Punt Road, and the main St. Kilda Road. The area of the grant of land was twenty-one perches.

The company placed a water tank and five stand pipes at this spot, at a cost of nearly £6,000, and the ground was enclosed by a fence. The fence obstructed the highway past the water tank, that is, from Nelson Street, Windsor, to the St. Kilda Road. A large gum tree stood alongside the tank. The tree was considered to be valuable to the company, because of the shade that its spreading branches threw over the tank. It was a busy corner. Often twenty water carts would be waiting to be filled at one of the stand pipes. The time occupied in filling a water cart was one minute. The company charged 2/- per load for the water, pumped from the Yarra, when it reached the water tank at the St. Kilda Junction, as against 1/- per load the water carriers paid at the company's stand pipe in Chapel Street. The charge of two shillings was considered to be too high by the St. Kilda residents, since they had to pay the water carriers three shillings, and more, per load for cartage. The total cost of each barrel of water delivered to a St. Kilda householder was five shillings.

Water carriers' charges had been high enough in the first days, but the residents found that the South Yarra Water Works. Company's service was still more expensive. They had assisted to obtain the water tank site for the company. They felt they had a justifiable grievance. Protesting letters appeared in the newspapers. The directors of the company did not answer them, and so the directors became very unpopular with the St..

Kilda residents. The directors assumed the independence that sometimes accompanies the owners of a monopoly.

One resident of Windsor, who was a publican, and also a councillor, 1856-7, of Prahran, named William Oliver, regarded the water tank and its fence at the Junction with disfavor, as obstacles preventing market gardeners, and others, who did not purpose to quench their thirst with water, from entering his hotel, the Windsor Hotel, at the corner of Nelson and Punt Road. Oliver was a man of mettle, to be reckoned with, if the company directors had only known of his humor in time. When the directors caused the area of the police reserve granted to the company, to be fenced they, by doing so, cut off direct access from St. Kilda Road to Oliver's public house. Oliver considered that the volume of his bar trade which was mainly derived from travellers along St. Kilda and Brighton Roads, was less than it should be owing to the presence of the obstructing fence. He asked the directors of the company to remove the fence and to refrain from interfering with public rights of way. They refused to do so. Hot-headed, Oliver hired some men to cut the fence down. Police Magistrate Hackett was sitting in sessions in the St. Kilda Police Court at the Junction, at the time Oliver's men were chopping the fence down. James Munro, father of the late James Munro, of Parliamentary fame, was in charge of the stand pipes. He rushed into the Police Court, and hurriedly lodged a complaint before Mr. Hackett. The magistrate left the Bench, and taking with him the visible arms of law in the form of two or three constables, he went to the company's tank, and made Oliver and his men stop their daylight work of destruction. Oliver, who was truculent, declared that he was a councillor of Prahran, and that he was not to be cowed by Police Magistrate Hackett, and that he only ceased action because he was faced by a greater force than he himself had at his command.

In some respects Oliver was not unlike a greater Oliver than himself. He was determined that the fence, like the historical bauble, should be taken away. One morning, to the surprise of the Water Works officials, when they came to work, they found that the fence had gone, and, to their still greater surprise, the tree that had shaded the tank was not only cut down, but it also had been carted away!

This Cromwellian act of Councillor Oliver was the talk of St. Kilda and Prahran. Not a great time passed before Councillor Oliver found that he was known in Melbourne, as the man who had razed the fences of the Water Works company, as the man who had cut down the company's favorite gum tree. Oliver even went further. He sold the tree, when he had had it cut into blocks, to a firewood dealer for £4, and then he spent the £4, in paying the men for their services in laying waste the company's property.

The angry directors of the company filed a writ against Oliver for trespass. They claimed damages for the destruction of the gum tree. At the trial, learned counsel, in the person of Mr. Archibald Michie, urged in defence, that the passage way blocked by the company's fence was a public convenience. Oliver was represented by his counsel to be a champion of the public rights of highway. The Chairman of the Prahran Council, Councillor F. J. Sargood, swore, in Court, that the company's tank was so ugly that his horse had shied at it. The St. Kilda residents gave a general chuckle of merriment when the company was awarded 40/- damages. A public subscription paid Oliver's law costs, and the damages.

Dour and defeated, the company held the key of the St. Kilda fountain, and waited patiently for the time when the St. Kilda residents would smart for their laughter, and pay for their newspaper abuse; and the opportunity came with a hot wind on December 23, 1856. On that day the first large fire in St. Kilda took place in High Street, two hundred yards away from the Junction Hotel. The fire started at 2.30 p.m. in a wooden building, used as a boarding school, and known as Gordon's Academy. Dalmahoy Campbell, Captain in the Victorian Yeomanry Corps, was the owner of the building, which contained fourteen rooms on two floors, 'as well as a stable, and attached out-houses. At the outbreak of the fire, a rush was made by the residents to the water fountain, when the company's officials told them that no water would be supplied to put out the fire for less than two shillings a load. The usual price for water to quench fires was sixpence per load. While the price was being discussed the fire, favored by the north wind, consumed the school.

Twenty minutes after the fire started, Superintendent Dalton arrived with the Melbourne Corporation Engine, and almost at the same moment the fireman of the Emerald Hill Fire Brigade, with their engine, pulled up their galloping horses alongside the burning place. The residents in the neighbouring houses had, under the duress of a roaring fire, agreed to pay the water company the two shillings its officials had demanded. Meanwhile the wind's force increased, causing other buildings to catch fire, and they were completely burnt. Some £2,000 worth of property was destroyed. Great indignation was expressed at the company's refusal to supply water at the usual rate. The company again did not take any notice of criticism.

The residents of St. Kilda, while not forgetting the refusal of the company to supply water in the hour of common peril, had no alternative but to continue to buy water supplied at the company's stand pipes. A whole year passed before the residents were in a position to try to make other arrangements. On the night of Tuesday, December 29, 1857, a meeting of the residents was held in the Junction Hotel, St. Kilda, for the purpose of taking steps to have a main extended from the newly-opened Yan Yean water works to St. Kilda. The Chairman of the municipality, Councillor Cowderoy, was in the chair. He stated that those residents who had requisitioned him to call the meeting, were strongly in favor of obtaining the Yan Yean water service for St. Kilda. He assured them that the Council was of the same mind, so far as the extension was concerned, but the Council objected strongly to a clause in the "Melbourne Sewerage and Water Bill" which governed the Councils', and the ratepayers' position. The clause was objectionable to them because it provided that the St. Kilda Council, and any other Council, served by the South Yarra Water Works, must pay to the company the full amount of its capital expended in the district that had used its service, and this payment had to be made before the district concerned could be connected with a main from the Yan Yean. Resolutions in favor of securing the main were passed by the meeting, but every speaker objected to any payment being made to the South Yarra Water Works Company. A petition to both Houses of Parliament to that effect was ordered to be prepared and presented.

In the year 1858 the Council waited as a deputation on the Government, and also, by communication, and co-operation

with other municipalities, and the Commissioners of Water Supply, as well as by petitions to the Legislature, to further the object of having a supply of Yan Yean water laid on to St. Kilda. The Council, in its report of such actions, explained that the delay, in passing the bill, before the Legislature, for amending the Water and Sewerage Act had prevented any definite results being arrived at, so far as St. Kilda was concerned.

In the meanwhile, water being so scarce in St. Kilda, a deputation of the St. Kilda Council waited on the Commissioner of Lands and Survey, on March 7, 1859, for the purpose of obtaining a grant of money for the construction of a well to conserve a spring of water. The Hon. Attorney General, H. S. Chapman, introduced the deputation, consisting of Councillors Cowderoy, Fraser and Hall, the municipal surveyor, Sydney Smith and Messrs. Hatchell Brown and Handyside, representing the Caulfield Road Board. It was explained to the Minister that "the deputation sought to obtain the sum of £250 to expend on the excavation of a well, or reservoir, and to wall the sides of the same, for the preservation of a perennial spring, reserved for public use, near the Alma Road. The spring had never been known to be dry, but for want of proper reservoirs the water, which was of the purest quality, was, for the most part, wasted through being permitted to flow over, and be absorbed in the surrounding sandy soil. It was proposed to sink a good-sized well to a depth of twenty feet, and to wall it round with stone. The sum asked for would cover the estimated cost."

Councillor Cowderoy said he had known the spring for five years, and during that time it was perpetually flowing.

The Hon. J. G. Duffy said that if the money required could be taken out of the Park Lands' Improvement Fund, it would be a legitimate appropriation, as it was for the improvement of a fountain. He was of the opinion that, in this country, any claim for a water supply ought not to be overlooked.

The spring in question was situated in a reserve, marked "water reserve," and it was close to the St. Kilda Cemetery. The spring was used by the residents of the eastern parts of St. Kilda, though whether the spring's outlet was bricked into the form of a well we do not know. At a much later time, complaints were made by property owners in the

vicinity of the cemetery, that the drainage from the burial ground was altogether too copious, and was also perhaps a menace to health. The existence of this spring did not appear to be known to the writers who were engaged in the extended newspaper controversy.

Not long afterwards St. Kilda was given a service of Yan Yeau water. We have found that, in the year 1860, the Council, desiring to sweeten the streets, to lay the dust, had bought a water cart. The cart was regularly used, in the summer months, to sprinkle with water the business sections of the St. Kilda streets. The larger volume of the water used for that sprinkling was supplied by the Commissioners of the Yan Yeau water supply free of cost. The Commissioners had erected two stand pipes to supply water to the inhabitants at the cost of one shilling per load. The Council was trying to persuade the Commissioners to place two more water stand pipes in St. Kilda, one at the Greyhound Hotel corner, at the junction of High and Carlisle Streets, and one in Brighton Road, near the Elsternwick Hotel.

The St. Kilda Council continued to be industrious in other directions to promote the well-being of the residents. In a report of its activities at that time, 1858, the Council mentioned two by-laws which had been assented to by the Governor. They were :—"For the better prevention of fires, and the suppression of nuisances arising from the burning of bricks and offensive matters ; or from insufficient chimneys in manufactories. (No. 4), gazetted 23rd February, 1858." "For the conducting of elections and public meetings of the ratepayers, the determining the validity of disputed elections and regulating the proceedings at the election of Chairman. (No. 13), gazetted 23rd February, 1858."

The question of taking steps for the better prevention of fires came into prominence towards the end of 1859, when the St. Kilda Club Hotel was destroyed by a fire. The circumstances were unusual. The licensee was one Albert Edelmann, and he was away from the hotel on the night of the fire. He employed a Russian, named Aba Manaski, who had been a close friend of his, and whom he had known since 1846. Some trouble arose between them, and Manaski was suspected of having set fire to the hotel by way of a revenge for a threat that Edelmann made regarding the Russian's conduct towards the publican's wife.

The Russian was arrested. A coroner's jury found that "the hotel was wilfully set on fire, and the circumstantial evidence pointed to Manaski being the culprit."

The story of the fire, and of how the Wesleyan Church bell was rung, has the atmosphere of early St. Kilda in it. The fire was discovered at 1.45 a.m., on Saturday morning, December 3, 1859. The St. Kilda Club Hotel stood at the corner of Fitzroy Street and the Esplanade. It was a composite building, consisting of what were originally three private houses, and they had been joined together to form the hotel. The house nearest to the beach was rather larger than the other two. A connecting archway was built, at the end of the house, and the space over the archway was utilised for a room. In the archway was placed the bar of the hotel. All the rooms of the houses were used by boarders, and for other purposes, the hotel being a favored one by visitors desiring to stay by the St. Kilda beach. It was described in a Melbourne newspaper as "one of the finest hotels in St. Kilda."

At the time of the fire, the licensee of the hotel, Edelmann, was away on holidays in Sydney. He had allowed the Russian, Manaski, to occupy his upstairs room during his absence. When the fire started, Manaski refused, when the alarmed hotel boarders hammered at the door of his room, to at once open it. When he did so, the boarders saw that the walls of the room were on fire. Ten boarders in the house, and the servants tried to put out the fire, but they had only a few buckets, and into these buckets they had to pump water from an underground tank, and carry the buckets upstairs. What little wind there was to fan the fire came from the east. Trifling in strength though the breeze was, it served to keep the fire in the western portion of the hotel where it started. "Every exertion was made to remove the furniture, which was of a very valuable description. Nearly the whole of the furniture in the lower stories of the hotel was saved, as was also the stock in the bar."

As soon as the outbreak of the fire was known, the bell at the Wesleyan Chapel, Fitzroy Street, was rung by a policeman, and the chapel keeper hurried to the scene of the fire, where he is credited with having been helpful before the arrival of the puffing and panting members of the Prahran Fire Brigade. Captain J. B. Crews, and other members of the

brigade, were aroused from their sleep at about half past two a.m., and shortly after three o'clock they reached the burning hotel. They had had to drag their fire engine from Prahran to the Esplanade, for they were unable to procure the use of a horse in Prahran because there was a well-founded doubt whether the insurance company would pay for the hire of one. Captain Crews placed the end of the water supply hose in the underground tank. After the pump had been going for some time, the supply of water in the tank dribbled out. Then it was that the brigade captain had the visitors, and others, running to, and from, the sea, with buckets of salt water wherewith to feed the pumping engine. To visualise the early morning scene of the fight to put out this fire, at the corner of the Esplanade, in the year 1859, to see men hurrying across the sands, and up the sand-stone road, with buckets of salt water, is to re-create a remarkable scene that once took place at the Esplanade in early St. Kilda.

In the end the fire was quenched. The portion of the hotel where the fire started was burnt out. The loss, including damage done to the furniture, was estimated at between £1,200 and £1,500. The building was insured in three insurance offices, viz., the Victoria, the Northern and the Tasmanian, in various proportions, in the sum of £6,000, and the stock and furnishings, in the same offices, for £2,500 more, making in all £8,500." The Argus newspaper, commenting on the fire, stated :—"It certainly does seem extraordinary that a municipality, that is one of the most flourishing in the neighbourhood of Melbourne, and perhaps more than any other, is inhabited by gentlemen, who have large properties at stake should not possess a fire brigade."

In view of the loss of the hotel for want of adequate means, to extinguish the fire, the St. Kilda Council passed a resolution, "that it is desirable to have a fire engine located at St. Kilda, and that a committee be appointed to make arrangements with the united insurance companies, for procuring the same, as early as possible, subject to the best arrangements the committee can make, respecting payment for labor and water." A further motion, "that the Public Works Committee be directed to prepare plans, and specifications for an engine house, and keeper's room, at a cost not exceeding £200" was negatived.

It was true that St. Kilda had not a local fire brigade in December, 1859, when the fire at the St. Kilda Club Hotel took place, but it had had a fire brigade in the year 1857. There was also a fire brigade belonging to Prahran that was called the Prahran and St. Kilda Fire Brigade. It had some St. Kilda residents, living in the vicinity of Wellington Street, Windsor, in its ranks. The brigade was of little service to St. Kilda, but there was a reason for using the word "St. Kilda," and that was in an endeavor to obtain from the fire insurance companies payments for the brigades' services at St. Kilda. The St. Kilda residents were well aware of the methods of the members of the Prahran fire brigade, who would not attend at times a fire across the Wellington Street boundary if they did not receive from the insurance companies a subsidy for fire protection in St. Kilda. The position was most unsatisfactory, and it was this conduct that led to the residents of St. Kilda forming a local fire brigade of their own. Later it was owing to the action of the Melbourne United Fire Brigade Committee that the St. Kilda Volunteer Fire Brigade ceased to exist, in circumstances to be related.

The first volunteer fire brigade in St. Kilda was fore-shadowed at a meeting of the residents held in the Bay View Hotel, High Street, on March 19, 1857. About forty residents were at the meeting, including members of the Prahran Fire Brigade. The meeting decided to obtain certain information, and then it was adjourned until Thursday evening, March 26, at the Bay View Hotel, when a larger muster of those interested in the formation of the fire brigade was present. Councillor Hale was voted to the chair. He asked W. S. Woolcott to read the report of the deputation, appointed at the last meeting, to call upon the different insurance companies, to seek from them aid to establish, and to maintain, the proposed fire brigade. The deputation reported that the different insurance companies had promised their assistance, and also to give to the proposed brigade a fire engine if, and so soon as, its members were enrolled. It was reported that a "great deal of argumentative conversation took place. but ultimately the following business was transacted:—

“Proposed by Mr. Woolcott, and seconded by Mr. Booker:

“That the St. Kilda Volunteer Fire Brigade be now established, and that it do consist of a captain, a lieutenant,

treasurer, secretary, twenty working members, and such honorary members, as shall subscribe to the objects of the Brigade.'

"Carried.

"Proposed by Mr. Woolcott, and seconded by Mr. Earls:

" 'That this meeting proceed at once to the enrolment of members.'

"Carried.

"Between twenty, and thirty members enrolled their names on the spot, and after a vote of thanks had been called for, and given to Mr. Dalton (who was present), and the Chairman, the meeting separated, on the understanding, that those present were to meet on the following Wednesday at the Junction Hotel."

The "Mr. Dalton" referred to was connected with the insurance companies. He had attended the meeting for the purpose of informing those present that he had a fire engine he was authorised to give to the brigade, immediately the brigade was in a position to accept it.

An odd copy of the Prahran and St. Kilda Advertiser, dated July 8, 1857, is preserved in the Melbourne Public Library. Under the heading of "Local Intelligence," we find in that issue of the paper:—"Prahran and St. Kilda Fire Brigades. On Monday evening, the Prahran and St. Kilda Fire Brigades met on the practice ground in Westby's Paddock for a friendly trial of skill; both parties mustered in force, and went through their manoeuvres with spirit, but in point of quickness, and general efficiency, we are informed the palm lay with the Prahran Brigade, and obtained the merited encomiums of the Superintendent."

On July 29, 1857, the St. Kilda Council resolved to appropriate a sum not exceeding £150, for the purpose of erecting a movable fire brigade engine house. Later, a municipal note explains that, "a proper site for this building not having yet been obtained the money has not been paid." Evidently the members of the St. Kilda Volunteer Fire Brigade were not treated well by the insurance companies of Melbourne, but they struggled on for a time. If we may accept the brigade secretary Watt's word, written on March 2, 1859, a "monstrous injustice was done" to the members of the St. Kilda Volunteer

Fire Brigade. In disgust, they resigned their positions as firemen. The Brigade thereupon ceased to exist. The cause of such a drastic decision was a resolution passed by the Melbourne United Fire Brigade Committee. The composition of that committee was of men representing insurance interests. The resolution was :—"Resolved that notice be given to the St. Kilda Volunteer Fire Brigade that in consequence of the heavy expenditure attending the working of two volunteer fire brigades —Pahran and St. Kilda—in one district, the committee will not contribute towards the St. Kilda Brigade in future."

The St. Kilda Volunteer Fire Brigade had, before the resolution was passed, cost the committee £30 per year. The insurance companies obtained hundreds of pounds as insurance premiums from the householders in St. Kilda. Other arrangements for a time were made by the insurance companies, but the St. Kilda Volunteer Fire Brigade was persuaded to once more resume its work. In the year 1861, the captain of the brigade wrote a letter to the editor of the "Argus" newspaper complaining that the brigade received no encouragement, and it had no money, therefore, once more, the members were about to resign their positions.

In January, 1861, the St. Kilda Council decided to call for tenders for the erection of an engine house to be put up on the Town Hall reserve. That locality was fixed upon because it was thought that the expense of keeping someone specially in charge of the engine house, and engine, would be obviated as the policemen, who were always on duty, at the station alongside, could take charge of the engine. The "engine" was the word used to describe a reel, and hose, with a pump, and canvas troughs to hold the water. At a fire, water was poured out of buckets into the troughs, and from there it was pumped into the hose. Active residents carried water, others worked at the pumping handles, made in the form of an oblong frame, that allowed room for six helpers to pump on each side of the troughs.

The St. Kilda Council anticipated that the police would take charge of the engine, in connection with the "municipal workmen, employed by the Town Surveyor." The policemen declined to have anything to do with the engine. The Council found that the position was not quite as satisfactory as the councillors desired. A fresh site for the housing of the engine

was sought. Some of the residents thought that the engine should be stationed in a building nearer to the Junction than the police station, preferably on the top of the High Street hill. William Nicholson, M.L.A., offered to let the Council have a piece of ground in Barkly Street, for the purpose of a fire station, free of cost. Apparently the Council did not accept the offer, but selected a site in Inkerman Street. When the Council made its twelfth half yearly report, ending March 10, 1863, a fire brigade was in full being. We learn that the insurance companies committee had "granted a reel, and hose, for which a suitable shed has been erected, also a bell tower, on which a powerful alarm bell has been placed." A belfry without a bell, is still to be seen (August, 1930) on top of the old St. Kilda watch-house, but its wooden frame will soon disappear, when the "house wreckers" begin to demolish the abandoned building.

When the service of the Yan Yean water was laid on to St. Kilda, it was hoped, that a direct pressure of water, from a main pipe, would be a great improvement on the power of the jet of water, forced from the old fire pump, but as the water pressure of the Yan Yean service proved to be very small, the saving of houses from fire was not greatly improved. In the year 1863, and in subsequent years, the St. Kilda Municipal Fire Brigade appears, from records that exist in the archives of the Council, to have been an efficient body, apart from defective hoses and want of water pressure. Several reports, written on blue foolscap, and signed by Sergeant Farrell, have survived the wrack of time. A valued officer was Sergeant Farrell, Inspector of Slaughter Yards, and other doubtful places. When the Chief Commissioner of Police told the Council, it was usual to appoint, each year, different policemen, to such positions, carrying a small honorarium, the Council said they wanted Sergeant Farrell to occupy the offices he held, and, though "it was unusual to grant such a request," Captain Standish, the Chief Commissioner of Police, complied with the Council's wish. Such was the officer, who made the detailed reports of fires in St. Kilda, and recorded just what happened. Every report contains in its first few lines, the information that the Superintendent of the Municipal Fire Brigade, Henry Tullett, J.P., was present at the fire. Accounts filed show that the firemen were supplied with refreshment, at

the fires—i.e., beer. "Refreshment for Brigade, 11/-," is a recurring account. The man, or woman, who first gave the alarm of the fire, at the police station, received 10/- . The firemen were paid 5/- for each fire they attended. The foreman (David Johnstone) of the firemen received 6/-. Amounts allowed for hours of practice with the reel varied from 5/- to 2/6. Cabmen who drew the reel to a fire earned 10/-. Among the list of firemen's names are John Norris, John Mooney, F. Fitch, William Armstrong, W. J. Baxter, John Stenmedel, B. W. Kellher, Louis Anderson, and cabmen, John Rayner, F. Higgins, John Devereaux. On the outbreak of a fire, the cabmen raced to the fire station, and the first to arrive rang the fire bell. Afterwards he drew the reel, behind his cab, to the fire, receiving for the services of giving the alarm and for cartage, £1. On January 1st, 1867, a fire started in Jacob Speicher's tobacconist's shop, in High Street, close to the Junction. The fire consumed thirteen shops, including three cottages of Councillor Florence Gardiner, in Wellington Street. The pressure of water, from the Yan Yean pipes, was always insufficient, and was so at this fire, yet in April, 1867, Sergeant Farrell reported that the condition of the Brigade's hose was so rotten, that each time the water was turned on, though its pressure was so small, the hose burst in places. He suggested the hose be exchanged for another, though he did not indicate where such a rotten hose might find an owner. Why the police sergeant made the report to the St. Kilda Council about the condition of the fire hose, and not the "Superintendent of the Municipal Fire Brigade, Henry Tullett, J.P.," is not evident.

From the Council's report of 1882, we substract the information that, "new and substantial quarters have been erected at the market for the fire brigades." In the year 1885, a volunteer fire brigade was formed at Balaclava, and the Council "in pursuance of its policy of supporting such useful volunteer organisations" erected a fire station at a cost of £64/16/- in Carlisle Street. The land upon which the building stood was rented from the Victorian Railway Commissioners. The end of the volunteer fire brigades movement, which had served the public well, came when the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board was created, under the Fire Brigades' Act 1890," which Board came into being in February, 1891. The whole business of firefighting passed into professional hands, and paid firemen. The

city of St. Kilda, for the purposes of representation on the Board, was placed in the southern group of the newly-created metropolitan fire district.

On January 25, 1927, an up-to-date fire station, to serve St. Kilda, was opened at the corner of Scott Street, and Brighton Road, St. Kilda. The official ceremony was performed by the Chairman of the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board, Mr. F. T. Hickford, the Mayor of St. Kilda, Councillor Burnett Gray, and councillors of St. Kilda, and others, being present. The fire brigade station was stated to be a model station, and the most efficiently equipped of any station in the suburban fire area. The station is staffed by six permanent men, and four partial time men. The brigade gave a demonstration of its efficiency, and afterwards the toasts of the St. Kilda Council, the Fire Brigades Board, and the chairman were honored. Co-incident with the opening of the new fire brigade station the old fire brigade station in Inkerman Street ceased to exist.