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Souvenir of the

Vancouver

Fire Department

1901

Published and
compiled under the
auspices of the Firemen's
Benefit Association of Vancouver, B.C.

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Notes compiled by George McInnis, Captain,
Vancouver Fire Department in 1963.

p.3 First chief was F. Peadgriff.

p.6 Para.3. Steam pumper "Jos. Humphries" named for Joe Humphries, agent for Moodyville Sawmills, 1887, and one of Vancouver's first aldermen.

p.10 J.E.Michell should read J. Edwards Mitchell.

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Review of the Vancouver Fire Department

VOLUNTEER AND PAID

By James A. Lester, Captain No. 1 Co.

IN THE MONTH OF MAY, 1886, Vancouver was as yet a tiny spot in the wilderness, comprising scarcely a thousand persons, the majority of those living in that part of the town now bounded by Hastings, Cambie and Carrall streets on three sides, and on the other by the waters of Burrard inlet. A number of the public-spirited citizens, recognizing the ever present danger from fire, met in the building used as a jail and court-house, which occupied the present site of No. 1 Fire Station on Water street.

After some deliberation, a volunteer brigade was formed, with a membership of forty. Mr. J. Griffiths was elected chief. At the same time the Town Council purchased one engine, four hand reels, and 2,500 feet of 2½ inch rubber hose, same to be delivered as soon as possible. Pending the arrival of apparatus, the newly formed volunteer brigade was at a standstill, and could do nothing but perfect the organization. Rules were adopted and officers elected, and the members waited patiently.

Such were the conditions when, on the afternoon of June 13th, the cry of "Fire!" was raised. Excited men ran from door to door calling on people to fly for their lives. It must be remembered that west of Cambie street was at this time in its primeval state, being covered with heavy timber and dense undergrowth. The fire started in this, and it was quickly apparent that the town was doomed. Desperate men fought the flames, foot by foot, with the means at their disposal, but were finally forced to fly for their lives, so quickly did the fire travel. Many escaped by clambering on hastily built rafts and pushing out on the waters of Burrard inlet. Others sought safety by way of False creek. The elements seemed to have entered into a compact to destroy. The wind had risen to a gale, blowing the fire directly on the waters of the inlet, while the tide, rushing inshore at a speed of eight or ten miles an hour, seemed to be diabolically intent on forcing all who ventured on it back into the raging furnace from which they were trying to escape. The area burned extended from Cambie to Carrall street, and from Hastings street to Burrard inlet. One building only, the Regina hotel, situated at the corner of Cambie and Water streets, escaped the devouring element. The alarm was given at 2:20 p.m., and at 5 p.m. the fire had about burned itself out. Men, anxious and worn out, but filled with the courage for which the hardy pioneer of the West is noted, began at once to consider ways and means of replacing their homes and

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providing what present shelter they could for the women and children. Tents, clothing, blankets and other necessaries were sent from Victorla and New Westminster, lumber was supplied by the Hastings mills, and the rebuilding of a new Vancouver over the yet warm ashes of the old one was begun.

To add to the horror and desolation of the scene, the charred remains of nine persons were found. More were known to have perished, although their bodies were never found, and it is supposed that they were entirely consumed, or that in their mad rush, blinded by smoke and fire, they stumbled into old wells and were drowned.

In July occurred what has been known as the second scare. The people had not, as yet, recovered from the effects of the disaster of June when the existence of the town was again threatened by the bush fires surrounding it. With the only too vivid remembrance of the previous month before them, they set to work moving such of their property as could be removed. Stoves and other household effects were hastily buried, but a fortunate change in the direction of the wind averted the catastrophe.

On August 1st the engine, hose reels and hose ordered by the Council arrived, and a load of anxiety thereby taken off the minds of the people. This apparatus was put under canvas on the corner now occupied by Thos. Dunn & Co. as a ship chandlery, pending the building of the present No. 1 Fire Station. This building was hurried to completion and the apparatus moved into it. The engine was christened the "M. A. MacLean," as a mark of respect to Mr. M. A. MacLean, the first mayor of Vancouver. J. A. Morrison was appointed engineer. In the following September A. W. Cameron was appointed engineer to succeed J. A. Morrison. During the winter of 1886 and summer of 1887 pumping tanks were built on the corners of Water and Cordova, Hastings and Abbott, Columbia and Cordova, Water and Powell, and Dunsmuir and Granville streets.

In May, 1887, bush fires again threatened the destruction of the town. But the volunteers proved equal to the occasion, and after a fierce fight, lasting from 7 p.m. till 3 a.m. next day, the fire was got under control.

The fire line described a circle from the clearing in the vicinity of the present city hospital site to the corner of Hastings and Howe streets, and back towards English bay. The engine was stationed at the tank on the corner of Abbott and Hastings streets and 2,400 feet of hose laid. That tank was pumped dry, and the engine and hose moved to the tank at the corner of Granville and Dunsmuir streets. About midnight the wind, which had been blowing briskly throughout the afternoon and evening, died away, and by 3 a.m., all present danger being over, the brigade returned to quarters. But not for long, for on the morning of the next day, at 2 o'clock, another alarm told the citizens that their lives and property were again in danger. The volunteers responded promptly, and after another hard fought battle with the flames, lasting from 2 a.m. till 9 a.m., and in which they were materially assisted by the work of a shovel brigade (who were hired for the occasion and supplied with shovels by the Council), the fire was put out. The work of the volunteers in subduing this fire undoubtedly saved the town from a repetition of the disaster of June 13, 1886.

The officers of the brigade at this time were: J. H. Carlisle, chief; J. Blair, foreman No. 1 Company; J. Mettier, foreman No. 2 Company, and A. W. Cameron, engineer.

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The volunteer records not being available, it is impossible to give a list of the members or an account of the many smaller fires and alarms responded to during this period.

In the early part of 1888 J. H. Carlisle was succeeded by W. Mackinnon as chief, but was re-elected about three months later.

In May, 1888, the Council purchased a second engine, afterwards known as the "Jos. Humphreys," a village hook and ladder truck, two hand hose reels and a team of horses for the "M. A. MacLean" engine. These were the first pair of Fire Department horses purchased by the Council.

A Hook and Ladder company of seventeen men was formed, with W. McGirr as captain, and became very efficient.

No. 2 Station was built about this time and occupied by No. 2 Company. The "Jos. Humphreys" engine and two hand hose reels comprised the equipment of this station. Wm. Hamilton was appointed engineer, with J. W. Campbell as stoker.

In September, 1889, a paid Department was established by the Council. J. H. Carlisle was appointed chief, with the following list of members: T. Whiston, foreman No. 1 Company; Geo. Evans, foreman No. 2 Company; A. W. Cameron and Wm. Hamilton, engineers; D. Biggar and J. W. Campbell, stokers; W. L. Heyward, H. E. Campbell, L. Eggert and W. A. Williamson, hosemen; T. Simpson, driver of No. 1 engine, and A. Clegg, driver of No. 1 hose wagon. The Department had just received this wagon from the Silsby Manufacturing Co., and to it belongs the distinction of being the first hose wagon on the Pacific Coast. It is still in commission at No. 1 Station, and as serviceable as when first purchased.

The following call men were also appointed at this time: J Harvey, G. G. Henderson, J. Glen, Chas. Millington, H. Stewart, Geo. Taylor, J. Seajohn, F. Britton, T. Blair and G. Blair, making the total manual strength of the Department twenty-two men and a chief. The call members were paid $15.00 per month, and besides having to answer alarms during the day, were required to sleep in the fire stations.

In February, 1890, the Gamewell fire alarm telegraph was installed, the battery being set up in No. 1 Station. Fifteen boxes were located in different parts of the city, and on the 25th February the first alarm (a test) was sent in from box 15, then located at the corner of Granville and Hastings streets.

In 1891 No. 3 Station was built, and the "M. A. MacLean" engine placed in it.

About the same time No. 2 hose wagon, built by Winch of Vancouver, was placed in commission at No. 2 Station.

The water works system, which had been established in 1889 by a company, was purchased by the city in March, 1892. New mains were laid and hydrants located as the city extended.

In December of that year a Morrison duplex chemical engine was added to the Department and placed in No. 1 Station.

In July, 1893, call men were dispensed with and the Department established on a fully paid basis.

In October of the same year a third hose wagon was purchased and placed in No. 3 Station.

From 1894 till 1899 nothing further was done in the way of adding to the apparatus of the Department. In the latter year a

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Waterous engine, capable of pumping 1,000 gallons per minute, a 75-foot aerial truck and a double 60-gallon "Champion" chemical engine were purchased. The steady growth of the city, and the erection of numbers of fine business blocks, three or more stories in height, made this expenditure necessary.

In concluding this brief review of the Vancouver Fire Department, it may be said that, so far as the safeguarding of property goes, only a small part of the value of such an organization is shown in the reduction of fire losses. It should be remembered that insurance rates are based to a great extent on the efficiency of the Fire Department. There are many reasons besides these for the need of an efficient Department. The fact of Vancouver having escaped with a small annual fire loss is no guarantee that such conditions are to continue. The only hope of safety from fires lies in eternal vigilance.

Apparatus.

This consists of two steam fire engines, one first size Waterous and one Ronald; also, one Ronald in reserve; three hose wagons, one 75-foot extension Hayes aerial truck, one 80-gallon Morrison duplex chemical engine, one double 60-gallon Champion chemical engine, one village hook and ladder truck, two supply wagons.

Manual Force of Department.

One chief, one electrician, three captains, two engineers (steam), one secretary (detailed), two stokers, eight drivers, two truckmen, seven hosemen, two chemical engineers.

Benefit Association.

On the 8th November, 1898, the Lindley Opera company gave a benefit performance for the firemen of Vancouver, the receipts of which amounted to $75.00. In response to suggestions from members of the Department to make this sum the nucleus of a fund for injured and disabled firemen, a meeting was called by Chief Carlisle for the 14th November. The meeting was held at No. 2 Station, and was attended by two members from each station. Chief Carlisle was elected chairman and Captain Lester secretary. The representatives from each station were: No. 1 Station, Capt. Lester and A. Clegg; No. 2, W. G. Macdonald and Jas. McInnes; No. 3, Capt. Moran and A. W. Cameron.

On 31st January, 1901, a second meeting was held and a constitution and by-laws adopted, and the following officers elected: Honorary president, Mayor Jas. F. Garden; president, Chief J. H. Carlisle; vice-president, A. W. Cameron; secretary, Capt. Jas. A. Lester; trustees, R. H. Macauley, A. Clegg and Jas. McInnes.

The membership of the Association was composed of the members of the Fire Department and the following honorary members: Jas. F. Garden, Esq., and H. P. Gilmour, Esq., the former mayor of the city, and the latter a member of the City Council and chairman of the fire committee.

The first annual ball of the Association was held in the City hall on 10th February, 1899, and was so eminently successful, socially and financially, that the Association decided to make it an annual affair.

The Association has been a success since its organization. It has, of course, been impossible to provide for its maintenance by

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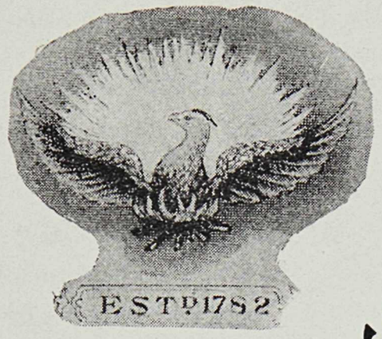

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dues alone, and the main dependence has necessarily been upon the annual ball receipts and donations from citizens. The affairs of the Association have been carried on in a business-like manner.

The Association takes this opportunity to thank the citizens for their kind and generous support on every occasion. It is the toast of the Association that to no other society or association do the citizens contribute so liberally to the purchase of ball tickets, and it is desired to express a cordial appreciation of this, and also of the liberality shown in advertising in this souvenir.

No. 1 Company.

James A. Lester, Captain. Born, February, 1869; nativity, Canadian; former occupation, painter. Appointed hoseman April, 1894; promoted to present position September, 1896. Secretary of Benefit Association since formation. Married.

J. W. Campbell, Chemical Engineer. Born, February, 1863; nativity, Canadian; former occupation, machinist; member volunteer brigade. Appointed on paid department September, 1889; appointed to present position December, 1892. Married.

A. Clegg, Driver. Born, March, 1861; nativity, English; former occupation, teamster. Appointed present position September, 1889. Treasurer of Benefit Association. Married.

J. W. McMorran, Driver. Born, January, 1874; nativity, Canadian; former occupation, teamster. Appointed present position March, 1898. Single.

John Courtney, Hoseman. Born, April, 1864; nativity, Irish; former occupation, longshoreman. Appointed hoseman in June, 1895. Married.

J. E. Michell, Hoseman. Born, February, 1874; nativity, English; former occupation, carriage setter. Appointed to present position April, 1897. Single.

William Jordan, Hoseman. Born, April, 1862; nativity, English; former occupation, brickmaker. Appointed present position August, 1892. Married.

No. 2 Company.

Charlton Thompson, Captain. Born, March 25, 1875; nativity, Canadian; former occupation, painter. Appointed hoseman June 17, 1895; promoted driver April, 1898; promoted captain April, 1899. Married.

Chris. H. Barker, Electrician. Born, August 2, 1869; nativity, English; former occupation, plasterer. Appointed hoseman August 13, 1895; promoted to electrician July 1, 1899. Married.

Andrew Gill, Chemical Engineer. Born, July 13, 1865; former occupation, stationary engineer. Appointed hoseman June 17, 1895; promoted to present position July, 1899. Married.

A. W. Cameron, Engineer. Born, May 27, 1845; nativity, Canadian; former occupation, locomotive engineer. Appointed engineer September 20, 1886. Married.

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James Davidson, Stoker. Born, June 29, 1867; nativity, Scotch; former occupation, locomotive engineer. Appointed October 1, 1899. Married.

James McInnes, Driver. Born June 6, 1862; nativity, Canadian; former occupation, teamster. Appointed to present position February, 1893. Single.

W. G. McDonald, Driver. Born, February, 1865; nativity, Canadian; former occupation, teamster. Appointed stoker October 15, 1892; promoted driver June 4, 1893. Married.

Richard Stansby Frost, Driver. Born, March 5, 1875; nativity, English; former occupation, setter. Appointed truckman March 1, 1900; promoted to present position November 1, 1901. Single.

Frederick Alfred Barker, Driver. Born, October 31, 1878; nativity, English; former occupation, teamster. Appointed truckman October 1, 1899; promoted to present position, May 1, 1901. Single.

Robert Cameron, Truckman. Born, April 28, 1880; nativity, American; former occupation, worked in wholesale drug store. Single.

Willlam Dixon Frost, Hoseman. Born, November 4, 1877; nativity, Canadian; former occupation, mill hand. Appointed hoseman October 1, 1899. Single.

W. E. Flood, Hoseman. Born, June 5, 1874; nativity, Canadian; former occupation, furniture worker. Appointed October 1, 1899. Single.

Edward McKeating, Hoseman. Born, December 27, 1878; nativity, Irish; former occupation, teamster. Appointed present position April 5, 1898. Single.

W. Brownlee, Chief's Secretary. Born, September 21, 1872. Appointed driver July 1, 1899; promoted to present position May 1, 1901. Single.

No. 3 Company.

James A. Moran, Captain. Born, June 29, 1859; nativity, Canadian. Helped to organize volunteer department September, 1885, and was elected assistant chief in 1888; appointed on paid department in 1890 as driver, and promoted captain in 1896. Married.

R. H. Macauley, Engineer. Born March 5, 1857; nativity, Canadian; former occupation, lumbering. Appointed as hoseman September 15, 1896; promoted to stoker April 1, 1898; promoted to engineer March 1, 1899. Married.

Fred Murray, Stoker. Born December 25, 1878; nativity, Canadian; former occupation, sash-maker. Appointed to his present position October 1, 1899. Single.

Henry Duncan, Driver. Born January 1, 1871; nativity, Canadian; former occupation, bridge builder. Appointed as hoseman October 1, 1892; promoted to driver 1893. Single.

Thomas A. Tidy, Driver. Born February 12, 1890; nativity, Canadian; former occupation, bricklayer. Appointed to his present position August 1, 1893. Married.

P. T. Hartney, Hoseman. Born October 31, 1876; nativity, Canadian; former occupation, farming. Appointed to his present position July 23, 1900. Single.

FIRE

Commercial Union Assurance Company

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List of Casualties by Fire and to Firemen.

October 6th, 1890. Duncan McQuarrie burned to death in a small house situate on sawdust flats, near Royal City mills.

June 4th, 1893. John Smalley, driver of No. 2 engine, killed by being thrown from engine seat, while answering alarm from box 24 for small fire in Chinatown.

April 22nd, 1896. Nine months' old child of Mrs. McCool perished in the flames at the burning of the home on Barnard street.

November 3rd, 1897. Explosion and fire at Royal City mills, causing death of two employes of mill, Forbes and Sully

February 15th, 1898. Charles Johnstone burned to death in wooden building near Leamy & Kyle's mill.

May 11th, 1899. George Cunningham burned to death in shack, in rear of Glasgow hotel.

February 18th, 1900. Jenny Davis burned by lamp explosion in house in alley between Princess and Keefer streets. Died from effects two days later.

August 30th, 1900. Mrs. Incanio and child perished in their burning home on Boundary avenue. Alonzo Incanio died from effects of burns received while trying to rescue his wife and child.

Donations to Vancouver Firemen's Benefit Association.

December 19, 1898.	—Joseph Sheasgreen	$50	00
"	—Charles Stimson	5	00
"	—W. H. Walsh	50	00
February 10, 1899.	—Capt. C. G. Johnson	7	50
" "	—B. T. Rodgers	15	00
" "	—R. B. Skinner	10	00
" "	—A. A. Boak	31	50
June 1, "	—C. F. Foreman	5	00
" "	—A. A. Boak	26	25
July 11, "	—North British Insurance Co.	5	00
September 8, "	— Trades and Labor Council	15	00
October 17, "	—Center & Hanna	25	00
November 22, "	—McTaggart & Moscrop	10	00
February 3, 1900.	—A. A. Boak	31	50
" 18, "	—S. McPherson	10	00
" 21, "	—J. Buntzen	5	00
" 21, "	—G. Starrett	5	00
" 22, "	—A. G. McKenny	5	00
February 26, 1900.	—Dr. Tunstall	$ 5	00
" 27, "	—Charles Wilson, K. C.	2	50
" 27, "	—A Friend	2	00
May 6, "	—Trades and Labor Council	30	00
" 6, "	—J. Wood	10	00
November 17, "	—Mr. Anderson	5	00
December 5, "	—A. A. Boak	62	25
April 17, 1901.	—A. A. Boak	43	50
" "	—Hastings Mills (per manager)	20	00
" "	—J. Buntzen	10	00
" "	—Dr. Tunstall	5	00
" "	—A Friend	2	50
" "	—Mr. Hobson	1	00
" "	—Sugar Refinery (per manager)	15	00
" "	—H. A. Jones	2	50
" "	—J. J. Banfield	2	50
" "	—Mr. Barker	1	00
" "	—Clarke & Stuart	2	50

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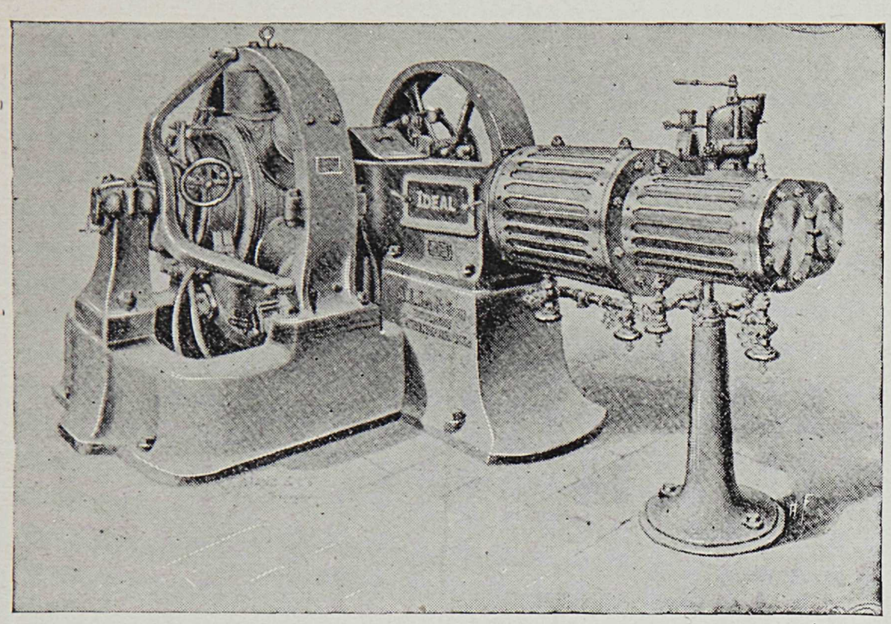
Vancouver Fire Alarm Boxes—Locations.

4.....C. P. R. Shops
5.....Cor. Granville and Drake Streets
6.....Corner Bute and Burnaby Streets
7.....Corner Comox and Nicola Streets
8.....Corner Beach Avenue and Denman Streets
9.....Corner Bute and Barclay Streets
12.....Corner Haro and Denman Streets
13.....Corner Pender and Georgia Streets
14.....Corner Burrard and Georgia Streets
15.....Corner Pender and Thurlow Streets
16.....Corner Thurlow and Nelson Streets
17.....Corner Nelson and Hornby Streets
19.....C. P. R. Wharf
21.....Corner Granville and Hastings Streets
23.....Corner Homer and Dunsmuir Streets
24.....Corner Cambie and Robson Streets
25.....Corner Cambie and Cordova Streets
31.....Corner Carrall and Hastings Streets
32.....Royal City Mills
34.....City Hall
35.....Corner Prior Street and Westminster Avenue
36.....Corner Powell Street and Westminster Avenue
37.....Hastings Mill
42.....Corner Cordova Street East and Carl Avenue
43.....Corner Barnard Street and Jackson Avenue
52.....Sugar Refinery
53.....Corner Campbell Avenue and Keefer Street
54.....Corner Princess and Boundary Streets
61.....Corner Dufferin Street and Westminster Avenue
62.....Corner Sixth and Westminster Avenues
63.....Corner Thirteenth and Westminster Avenues
64.....Corner Carolina Street and Seventh Avenue
67.....Corner Manitoba Street and Eleventh Avenue
68.....Corner Bridge Street and Seventh Avenue
71.....Corner Center Street and Seventh Avenue
72.....Corner Maple Street and Seventh Avenue

NOTE.—Several new alarm boxes are about to be installed and the location of some of the old ones changed. On and after January 1st, 1902, the above list of boxes and their locations will be found correct.



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Vancouver, B. C.

J. H. CARLISLE, Chief.

Born November, 1858, in the town of Hillsboro, Albert county, New Brunswick. Former occupation, teamster. Married.

Appointed chief of Volunteer Department in November, 1886, and, with the exception of three months in 1888, remained chief till the establishment of the paid Department in 1889. In September of that year the Council elected him chief of the first paid Department, a position which he still retains.

The many difficulties incident to the organization of the Department, as well as those encountered in its administration since, have been successfully overcome by him, and to-day the Department is considered among the most efficient on the Pacific coast.

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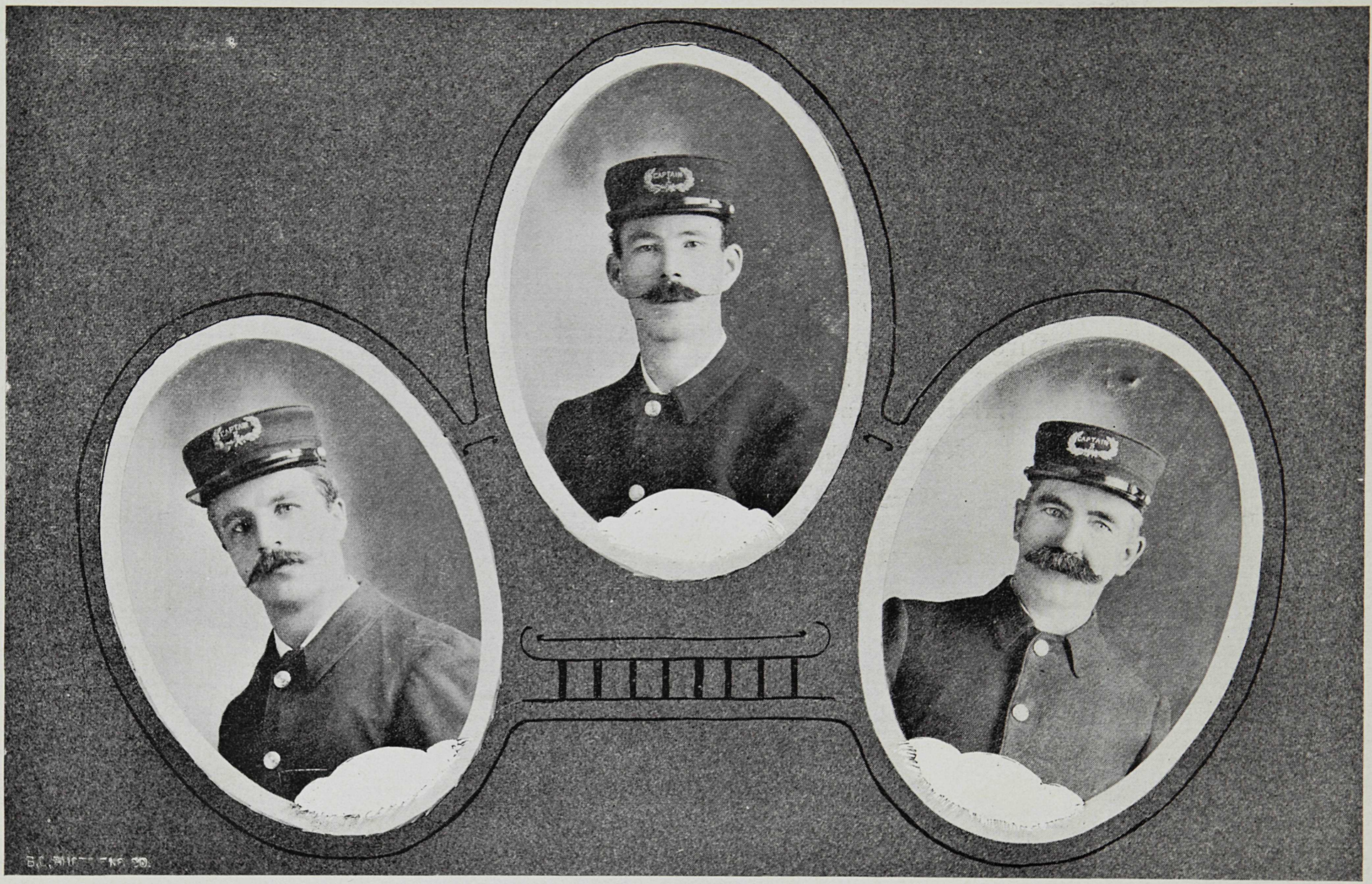

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London & Lancashire Fire Ins. Co. of Liverpool, Eng.

1—A. W. Cameron. 2—E. McKeating. 3—E. Flood. 4—Fred Barker. 5—J. Davidson. 6—R. S. Frost. 7—W. D. Frost.

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1—C. H. Barker (Electrician). 2—Andrew Gill. 3—Wm. Brownlee. 4—B. Cameron. 5—W. J. McDonald.

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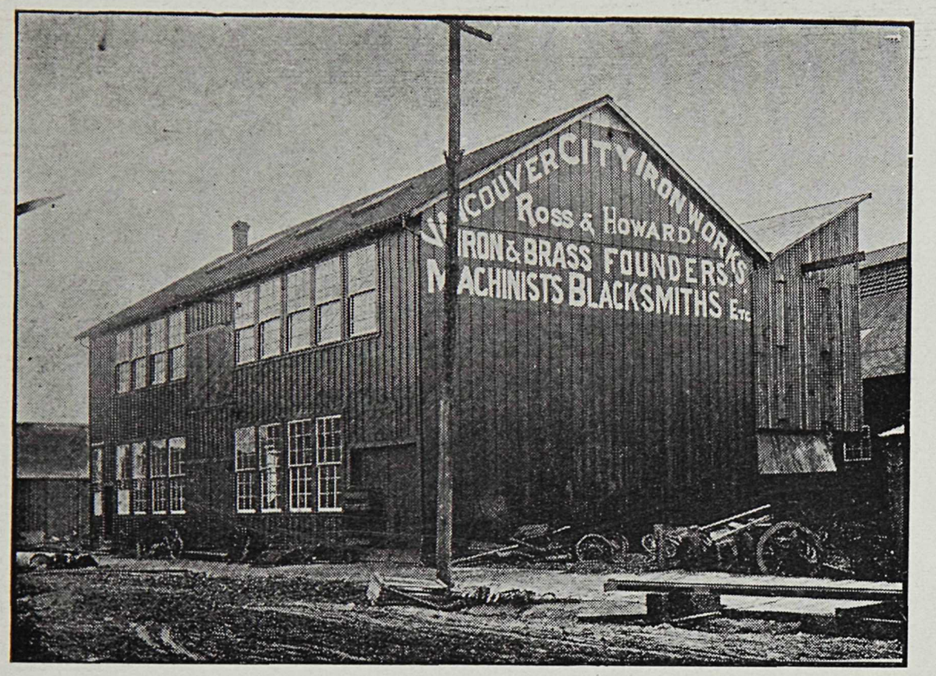

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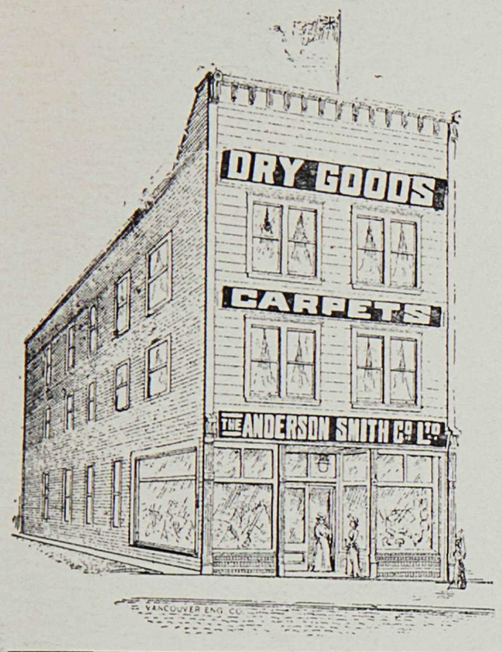

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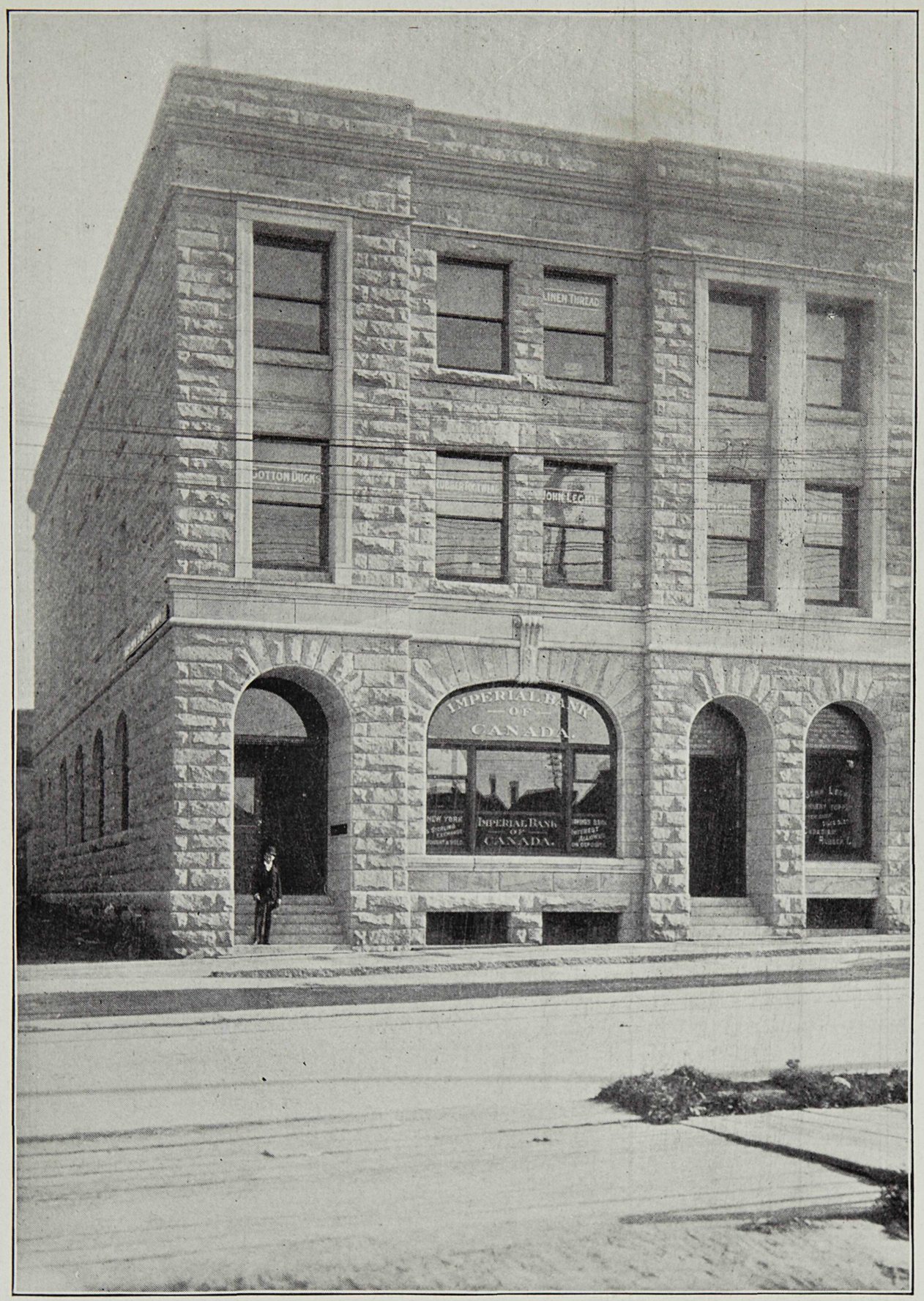

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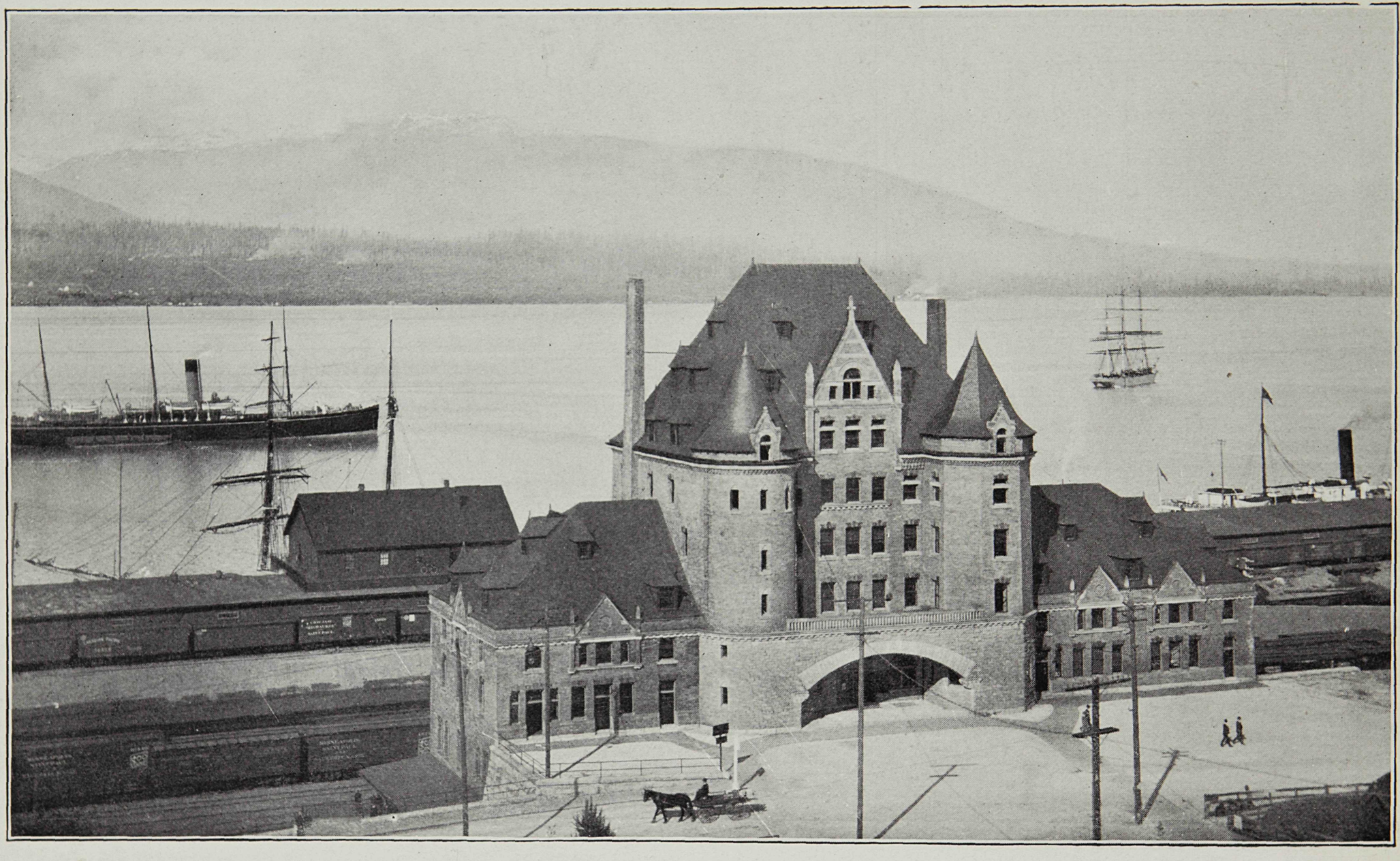

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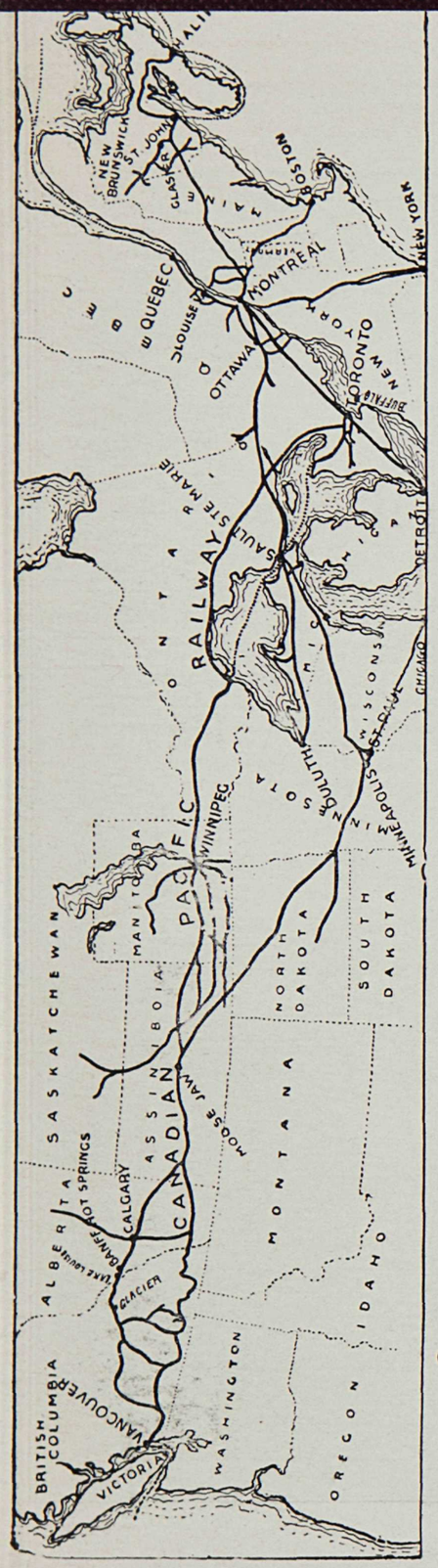

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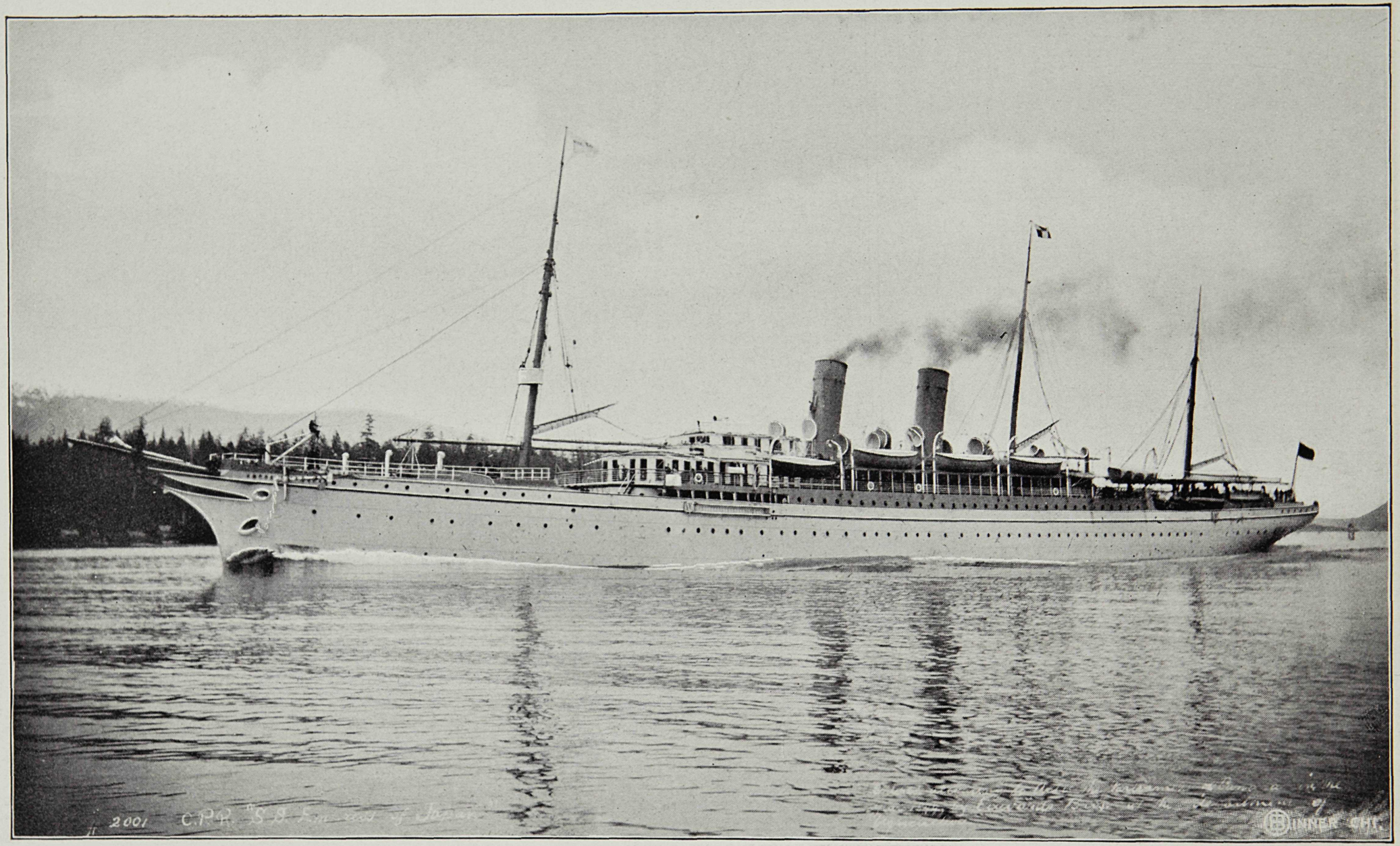

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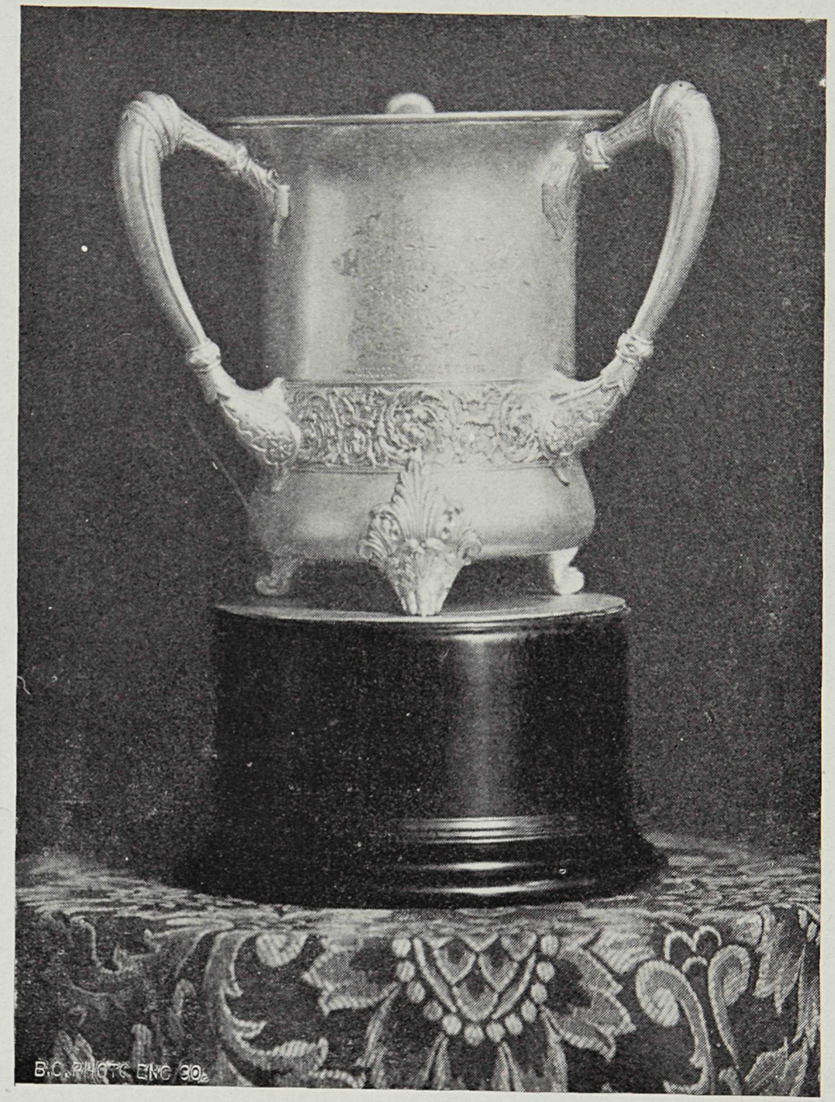
The Trorey Hand-Ball Trophy.

By Jas. A. Lester.

THIS handsome cup, a picture of which is here shown, was presented in 1900 by Geo. E. Trorey to the members of the Vancouver Fire Department. The conditions were that it be competed for annually by members of the Department.

The game of hand-ball is pre-eminently a game suitable for firemen, in that it calls for an amount of stamina and energy, a quickness of eye and decision. These are physical qualities absolutely necessary in a fireman, and any exercise tending to their development is desirable. Chief Carlisle was quick to note the good points of the game, and encouraged the playing of it in every way, as a means of keeping the men physically fit. Hand-ball courts were built at Nos. 1 and 3 Fire Stations, and games between picked teams from the three stations were arranged.



At the end of the season of 1900 Capt. Thompson and W. E. Flood, having defeated their opponents in every game, were formally presented with the cup by Mr. Trorey.

In the spring of 1901 a series of games were arranged, the first of which was played on 3rd June, and the last on 21st September. Each team entered, played ten games, and two games were played each week. J. E. Michell and J. Courtney were the winners of this series, and hold the cup until defeated.

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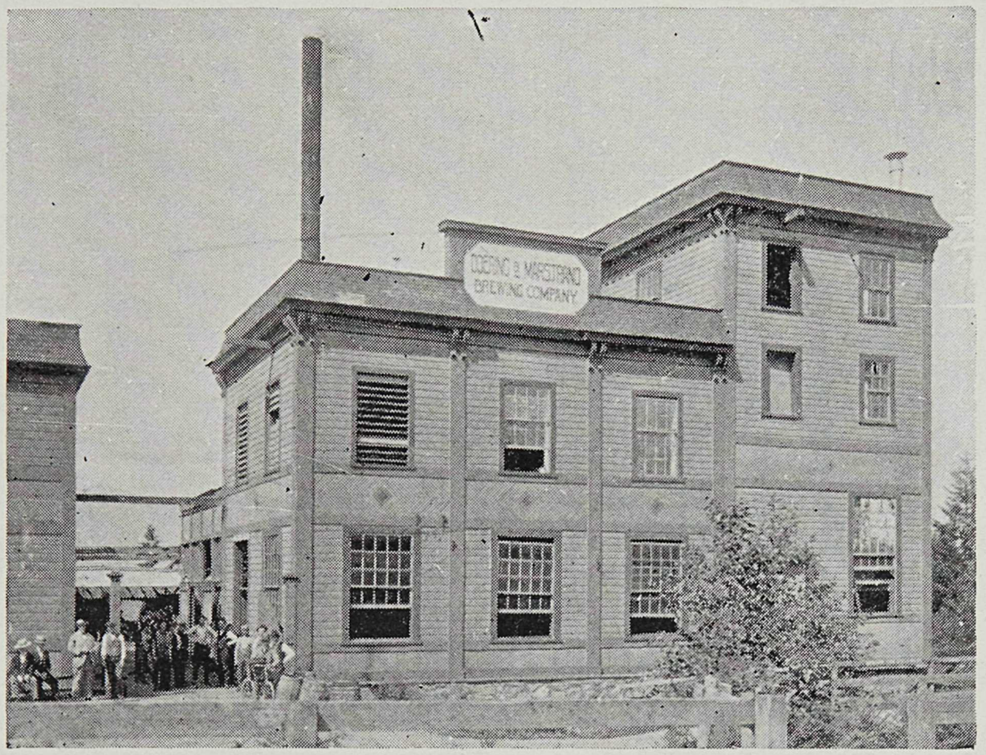

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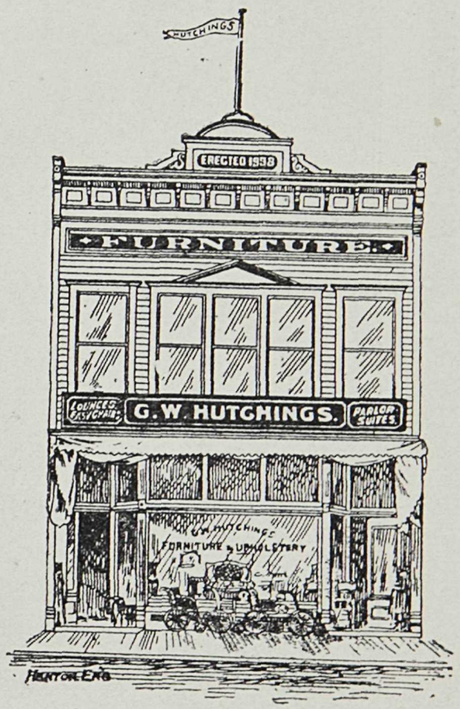

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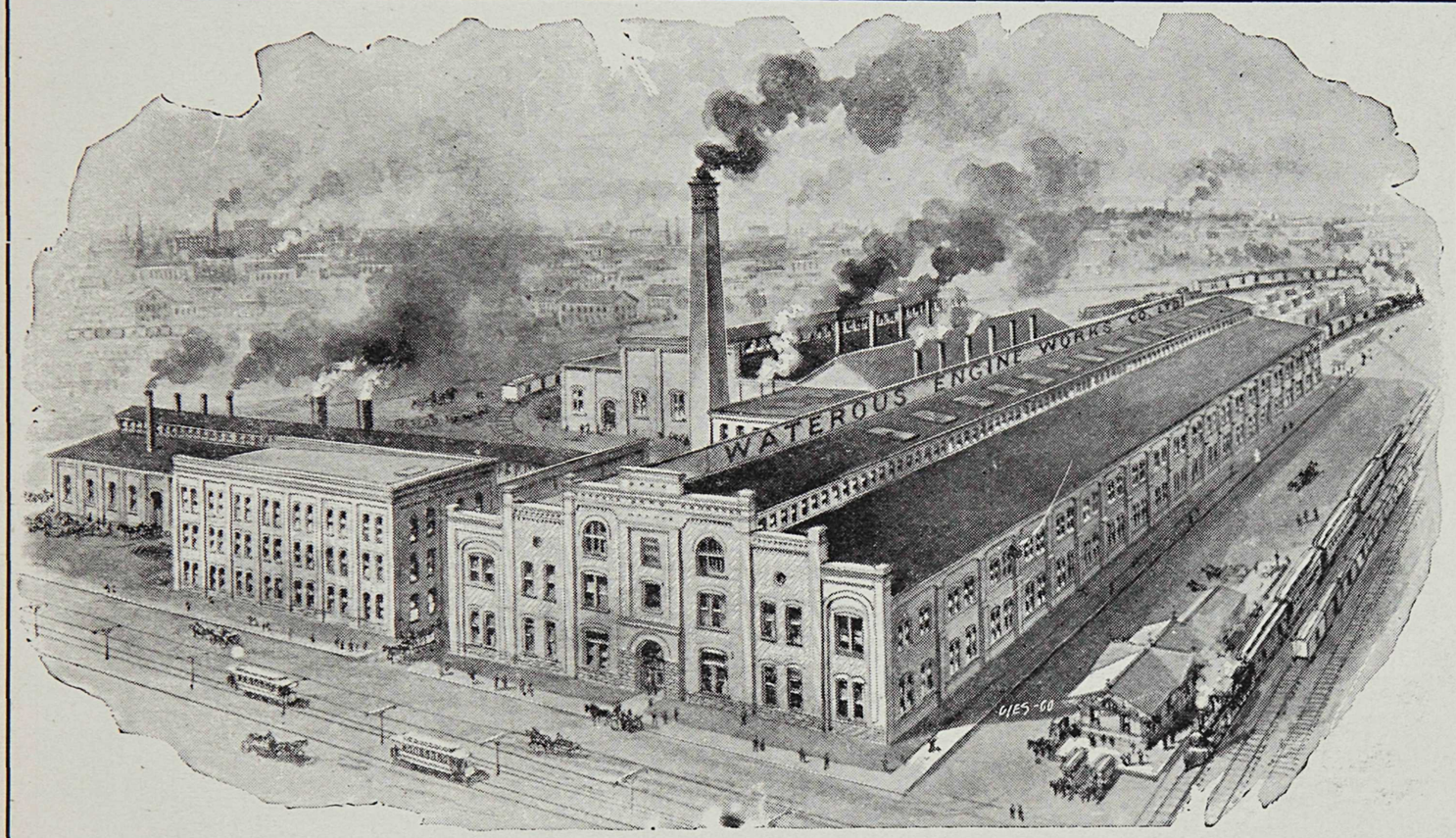

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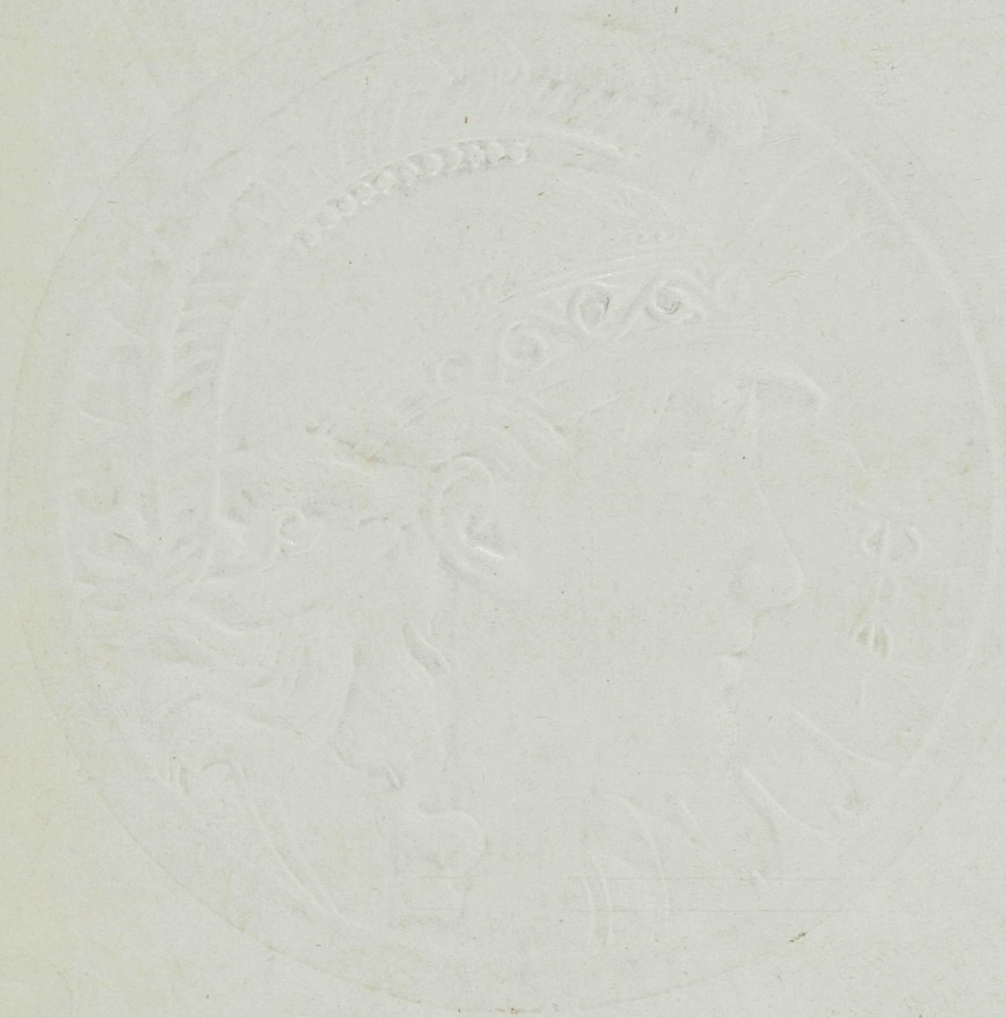
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