FORFAR STIR OVER FIRE ENGINE

COUNCILLOR PROTESTS TO SCOTTISH OFFICE

"Irregular Proceedings" Challenged

The findings of Forfar Town Council with regard to the purchase of a new fire engine are being challenged by Councillor A. C. Smyth, who has taken the matter up with the Scottish Office.

At the last monthly meeting of the Town Council it was revealed that tenders for a new fire engine had been opened by the fire brigade convener prior to the committee meeting.

The convener, ex-Bailie Thomas Guthrie, was called in question at the meeting, and he replied that it had been done before and that there was no harm done. He added that by opening the tenders and tabulating them he saved the time of the committee.

This reply, however, did not satisfy several members, and Bailie Smyth alleged that he had learned from people in the street of the decision to purchase a certain type of engine.

Provost's Warning

The entire proceedings were challenged by Councillor A. C. Smyth, on account of alleged irregularity. Eventually, however, the provost warned all conveners not to open tenders in future outwith the committee meeting, and the business proceeded.

By a majority, the Council decided to adopt the committee's recommendation, that a fire engine be purchased at a cost of £785. Councillors Barry and A. C. Smyth, as a protest, refused to vote, and the latter asked that his dissent be entered.

He has now communicated his objection to the town clerk and also to the Scottish Office Works Department, and asked for a ruling on the point.

If his views are upheld he is to petition for a special meeting of the Town Council to be convened with a view to having the proceedings nullified and fresh tenders taken.

KINGSMUIR CHILDREN ENTERTAINED.

The children of Kingsmuir School were entertained in the hall to a Christmas treat by the W.R.I. Mrs Elliott Carnegy, Lour, presided.

Through the kindness of Mrs Carnegy a conjuring entertainment was given. Tea, crackers, and fruit were served.

Santa Claus distributed presents to the scholars from an illuminated Christmas tree. Mr A. W. Halliday called for votes of thanks.

CRAICHIE SOCIAL CLUB CHRISTMAS PARTY.

Craichie Social Club held a Christmas party in the hall. Mr W. W. Colvin, the president, welcomed a company of almost 70.

Seasonable fare was provided by the ladies of the club, after which games and dancing were enjoyed, with songs by Mrs Ogilvie and a reading by Miss Reta Soutar. A surprise turn was given by Mrs Colvin.

For the games and dancing the music was provided by Mrs Drysdale, Mrs Colvin and Miss Maisie Muncall, with Mr Walter Stewart as violinist.

A Christmas party was given by the woman's guild of Melville Church, Montrose, to the Sunday school children, when, after tea, the evening was spent in dancing and games.

CRIEFF HAULIER BLAMES RAILWAY

Roles Reversed at Perth Traffic Sitting

Allegations of canvassing and under-cutting of carriage rates by the railway authorities to compete with road haulage were made at a Perth sitting of the Traffic Commissioners on Thursday.

Peter Halley, a haulier, 7 Galvelmore Street, Crieff, was responsible for this reversal of the more common complaint that road traffic was under-mining railway business. Mr Halley alleged that the competition of the railway company on the roads had reduced the return from his business by 50 per cent. in two years. More will be heard of the matter at the Forfar sitting of the commissioners in February, when the case for the railway company is to be submitted.

Mr Halley, in addition to applying for licences for vehicles in his possession during the basic year, also asked permission to acquire an additional vehicle. To this application the L.M.S. Railway Company objected.

In giving his evidence in support of the application Mr Halley explained that his business was one of the oldest in the district. It had been carried on by the family for nearly 100 years, and had been in existence before the railway came to Crieff. In 1930 he had had five motor vehicles, but during the basic year the number had dropped to two because he had lost contracts to a contractor whom he had previously called in to help him. The loss of these contracts, he contended, was due to under-cutting.

In answer to a question by Mr R. W. Currie, solicitor, Dunfermline, his agent, regarding under-cutting by the railway company, Mr Halley quoted the case of a customer for whom he had been doing jobs at a £1 rate, and the railway company two or three weeks ago had cut the rate down to 15s. He also said the railway company recently had been canvassing farmers in the district round about stations to which they had not formerly driven. Old customers had come and told applicant of these canvassers.

When the chairman, Mr Henry Riches, raised a point of procedure, Mr Currie offered to produce a man to whom an offer had been made for carriage at 15s where Mr Halley charged £1.

In reply to the chairman Mr Halley gave instance of the alleged under-cutting. He stated that where he had once charged 8s per ton for the haulage of potatoes to Perth Harbour, he had been forced by under-cutting to reduce the charge to 5s. Now the railway company was doing the work for 2s 3d or 2s 6d per ton. He had cut his charge down to 3s, but had had to refuse to reduce it any further. Where he had previously driven two or three hundred tons of potatoes to Muthill and Crieff Stations, he had now only an occasional load.

Cross-examined by Mr Weir, for the railway company, Mr Halley admitted that in the two years from 1932 to 1934 his returns had shown an increase of 20 per cent., but added that in the same period his tonnage had been increased by 50 per cent., so that he had lost 30 per cent. He admitted that the charge of £1 to which he had referred had been reduced to that figure from 25s, but he thought it was something new for the railway company to canvass for traffic to go by road. He agreed that before motor vehicles were introduced cattle had all been carried by railway, but denied that he had got that type of traffic by under-cutting.

In adjourning the case until February 26 at Forfar for the hearing of the railway company's replies, Mr Riches suggested that further evidence should also be brought to support the allegations of the applicant.

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DUNDEE-ANGUS SHOW IN LONDON

CITY COUNCILLORS ATTACK £50 OUTLAY

Providing for Organiser's Salary

A proposal to spend not more than £50 on advertising Dundee at the Dundee and Angus Exhibition at British Industries House in February and a request for powers to borrow from the Common Good to pay passing expenses until some of the exhibitors' fees were collected led to lively passages at a meeting of the Finance Committee of Dundee Town Council yesterday.

Treasurer Phin stated that the sub-committee had been successful in inducing a large number of firms to take space in British Industries House for the Dundee and Angus exhibition during February. They had also indicated that the salary of the organiser and all expenses would be met by the exhibitors.

In the meantime, however, the committee had no funds in hand. He suggested that the committee instruct the Common Good to finance the movement for a month or so until it was started.

The Common Good would be refunded for the money so expended. The money was principally to pay the organiser's salary from week to week and incidental and travelling expenses.

Mr Peter Gillespie asked if the firms could not put their hands into their pockets and advance the money themselves.

Industrial Sites

Lord Provost Buist said that the Development Committee was formed by Dundee Town Council, and it was that committee that had invited these firms to participate. They would not know for a few weeks the number of firms coming in.

He had thought they should allow a sum of £50—not that that might be expended—for the Town Council itself. He would rather like to see a big advertisement of the city of Dundee, showing spaces that were available for industrial purposes.

Bailie Blackwood moved that they authorise the Development Committee to spend whatever sum was necessary on the initial expenses, to be refunded later. To carp and cavil over a trifle like this, which had the important object of trying to bring trade to Dundee, was just a waste of time.

Bailie Greig seconded.

Mr D. R. Kidd said that he wanted to know who appointed the sub-committee and who were the members who organised this movement. They were entitled to get a list of the people on the committee.

The Corporation had thrown away money before.

The Treasurer—We are not giving a single penny.

£6 per Week

When Mr David Latto, depute town clerk, went to get the minute of the Development Sub-Committee, Lord Provost Buist said that Mr Kidd was quite in order. The minutes of the Development Committee had always gone through the Town Council month by month.

The appointment he was asking about was made at a meeting last Friday, when there were representatives of the firms in Dundee and of the various bodies in Angus interested. These people would be responsible in the end to the committee for the organiser's salary, which was £6 per week.

Mr Kidd asked if there was anything in the nature of a guarantee that the individuals interested would pay the Corporation the £300 expenses if the Corporation paid that money. He wanted the town clerk before the Town Council meeting to get that guarantee in writing.

Mr Latto said the organiser had to do that.

Mr Kidd said that a loan ought to be in legal form. It was a business deal. He moved that they instruct the town clerk to get it drawn up.

Unnecessary Work

The treasurer said there was no reason why that should not be done, but he thought it was a lot of unnecessary work for nothing. They only wanted to pay the organiser until they got in the money.

Mr Hubert Low said he took it that anyone who took a stall there would be a guarantor.

On the treasurer's assurance that this would be done the matter was allowed to drop.

The treasurer asked the committee if they wished to recommend to the Town Council that they should take advantage of the exhibition to advertise Dundee from the Council's point of view. Arbroath, Montrose, and, he thought, Brechin were to do so for their burghs.

Bailie Blackwood suggested that the treasurer should recommend it from the chair.

The treasurer said that he would recommend it, but would advise that the Council do not spend more than £50.

Bailie Fenton seconded.

Down the Drain

Mr Kidd said it was money thrown down the drain.

A city like Dundee could not be advertised for £50. The whole thing was so small and petty it should never be considered by a Corporation like Dundee.

He moved that they do not spend £50. If they could not do it right they should not do it at all.

Mr A. Powrie seconded. He was inclined to think that that exhibition, so far as the Corporation was concerned, meant nothing at all.

The treasurer said that showed a real lack of knowledge of the subject.

The reason for the rush was that they had been told on good authority that, if they did not accept the space in February, which was admittedly the best month, Edinburgh was to do so on the very same lines as Dundee was doing. He did not want it to go out that they had tried to hold up the progress of Dundee.

Business Vision

They must give business men credit for having some vision, and they were not spending their money uselessly. He would prefer to let it go out that they were helping rather than hindering.

Bailie Blackwood said that Mr Kidd had no constructive criticism to apply. His criticism was destructive all the time.

Mr Kidd's conception of municipal service apparently was to come and condemn what some other body was trying to do for the benefit of the city.

Mr Kidd said that to start and talk about advertising Dundee for £50 was ridiculous. If it had been £5000 it would have been something constructive.

On a vote the treasurer's motion to recommend an expenditure not exceeding £50 was carried by five votes to two. Mr Gillespie did not vote.

PROPOSED REUNION OF ANGUS FOLK IN LONDON

A real Angus night during the Dundee and Angus exhibition at British Industries House, London, in February was suggested at a meeting of the exhibition committee in Dundee City Chambers yesterday.

Treasurer Phin, convener, who presided, said that the London Angus Association were keen to do something definite for their county during the month.

There were 300 or 400 members. They might suggest a reunion and have a real Angus night.

It was agreed that Mr Thomas C. David, who has been appointed organiser, should proceed to London for two days to see the space which is to be available for the exhibition, and inform himself as to various other details in connection with the exhibition.

Seventy-five children attended a treat given in the Y.M.C.A. Hall, Cupar, by Cupar Co-Operative Women's Guild. The programme consisted of games, songs, and dances. Santa Claus (Mr Pettifer) distributed gifts from the Christmas tree.

ANGUS LADY'S DELUSION

BLACK MAGIC STORY AT INQUEST

GRIPPED BY TERROR ON CHRISTMAS EVE

The delusion that a dealer in black magic had some kind of spell on her was mentioned at the inquest at Westminster yesterday on Miss Violet Marjorie Augusta Kennedy-Erskine, aged 35, of Dun House, Montrose.

Miss Kennedy-Erskine was found dead in her room at the Empress Club with a scarf tied tightly round her neck and a large piece of blue silk stuffed in her mouth.

Recording a verdict of suicide while of unsound mind, the coroner, Mr Ingleby Oddie, said that Miss Kennedy-Erskine had had influenza, and this must have left profound depression and caused mental disturbance.

"She had been dwelling on some imaginary influence which she thought some person she had met in a hotel, who was a dealer in black magic, held over her.

"That had been preying on her mind, although it was entirely a delusion. She did not feel fit to travel home for Christmas, and probably, finding herself alone on Christmas morning, it was the last straw, and her mind entirely gave way."

HIGHLY STRUNG.

Mrs Kennedy-Erskine, dressed in black, except for a narrow white trimming over the bodice, said her daughter went to London from Huntingdon Park, Herefordshire, where she had been staying.

She had an ordinary temperament, except that she was highly strung.

The Coroner—Have you heard of any delusions that she suffered from?—Never until this terror that she seems to have had the night before this happened.

What was that?—I don't know.

GREAT DISLIKE.

Didn't she have some kind of fear about someone getting an influence over her?—She had a great dislike for anything pertaining to spiritualism or black magic, or those sort of things, and she did, I believe, meet someone. I do not wish to bring him in. I know nothing about him. She did think he dabbled in those things. A lot of people do. That frightened her.

The coroner asked if her daughter had spoken to a young lady about this.

Mrs Kennedy-Erskine replied—"She did not like him. His atmosphere was not good."

The Coroner—She had an idea that he was getting an influence over her?—That is so, though she did not mention it to me.

A LETTER.

Mrs Kennedy-Erskine added—"I had a letter from her which was absolutely and entirely normal. She said how very sorry she was she could not get up for Christmas, but that she was coming up the first day she felt fit for travel.

"She said she had had flu, and that it made her feel ghastly. She also said she had had heart attacks, and that she was bringing all her Christmas presents up with her."

Her daughter was temperate and was in no financial or other trouble.

Annie Holland, a chambermaid at the Empress Club, stated that on Christmas morning she took tea to Miss Kennedy-Erskine at eight o'clock, and there was a light showing from the fanlight.

"When I knocked I thought that Miss Erskine was talking to herself. I told her I had brought her tea, and she replied, 'None of you can come in pulling my leg.'

"When I repeated that I had brought her tea she replied, 'Do you want my key?'"

Finally she told her to put the tea down.

TEA UNTOUCHED.

"At 8.30 it was still there. I knocked at the door, and she told me that she was dressing. She would not open the door. She said she was nervous."

The Coroner—Was she talking to herself again?—Yes, and she sort of laughed. I went back later, and saw that the light was out. I thought at first that she had gone to church. I knocked six or seven times, but there was no answer. The door was locked on the inside.

Dr John Taylor said that death was due to congestion of the brain, arising from asphyxia, strangulation, and suffocation.

The coroner said that the young woman had undoubtedly committed suicide. She had behaved curiously, talking to herself what was obvious nonsense. She was rambling and quite abnormal. It appeared that her mind must have given way.

DUNBLANE R.C. CHURCH DEDICATED

BISHOP TONER BLESSES NEW BUILDING.

Clergymen and laymen from Perthshire and Dundee attended the consecration and dedication of the new Roman Catholic Church at Dunblane yesterday. The ceremony was performed by Bishop Toner, Dundee, bishop of the diocese of Dunkeld.

The church, which is the gift of the Hon. Mrs Stirling of Keir, has a frontage to Claredon Place near the main north road, and is constructed entirely of materials from the district. The walls are of local stone, and the roof covered with Aberfoyle slates.

A feature of special interest is the open timber roof of oak grown on the Keir estate, the outside railings also being of oak. The building has seating capacity in the nave for 250.

The church was built from designs by Mr Reginald Fairlie, architect, Edinburgh.

Bishop Toner, accompanied by a procession of canons and priests, including a monk of the Order of St Benedict from Fort-Augustus, blessed the exterior, and on reaching the porch dedicated the church to the Holy Family, by which name is will now be known. He thereafter blessed the interior of the building.

The bishop was the celebrant of Pontifical High Mass, at which the Very Rev. Canon MacManus, Stirling, and the Very Rev. Canon Keenan, Crieff, were deacon and sub-deacon. The Very Rev. Canon M'Daniel, Perth, and the Very Rev. Canon Russell, Lochee, were deacon and sub-deacon at the bishop's throne.

The Very Rev. Canon Doherty, Doune, who is also parish priest of Dunblane, was the assistant priest, with the Very Rev. Canon M'Currach, Dundee, as master of ceremonies. The preacher was the Lord Abbot of Fort-Augustus, Sir David Hunter Blair.

The Hon. Mrs Stirling attended the ceremony, and later entertained the clergy to lunch.

STRATHTAY MUSIC SUCCESSES.

At the recent examination of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, London, held in Perth, the following pupils of Mr Norman Smart, L.R.A.M., Strathtay, passed:—Preliminary, Margaret Johnstone, Birnam; Grade I., Margaret Robertson, Caputh (honours), and Mainie Bryan, Caputh (honours); Grade II., Euphemia Doig, Ballinluig.

NORTH BANK AGENCY CHANGE.

Messrs Blackstock, Rose & Company, S.S.C., retire from the joint agency of the North of Scotland Bank, Limited, Leith branch, as at 5th January next. Thereafter, Mr Samuel Laird, at present joint agent, will become sole agent.

GIFTS TO LOGIERAIT POOR-HOUSE.

The inmates of the Atholl, Weem, and Breadalbane Combination Poorhouse at Logierait were entertained to a Christmas treat, when Bailie Munro, Aberfeldy chairman of the house committee, presided. Special fare was provided throughout the day.

Through the kindness of Sir John H. Ward, Kinnaird, Ballinluig, gifts of rabbits were provided for the inmates. Mrs James Mitchell, Liberty House, Narrandera, New South Wales, sent an Australian lamb.

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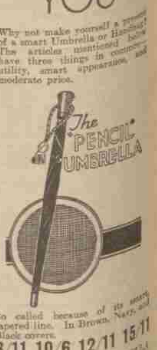

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