

REPORT CHIEF OF POLICE

Halifax, N. S., June 30th, 1919.

*To His Worship the Mayor
and Members of the City Council.*

Gentlemen:—Herewith I have the honor to submit my first annual report as Chief of Police of the City of Halifax for the Civic Year ending 30th April 1919. The reports for the two previous years were only in my capacity as Acting Chief during the absence of Major Rudland overseas, my appointment as Chief dating from 15th April 1918. Since my appointment to the office and during the past year, there have been a great many changes in the personnel of the force and many difficulties of a more or less serious nature had to be overcome which I am pleased to say do not at present exist.

Deputy Chief of Police Clarence A. Northover, whose appointment as such was made 15th April 1918, resigned the 16th of August 1918 and was succeeded in office by Sergeant Wm. E. Palmer, who since his promotion has been most assiduous in his duties and has rendered efficient co-operation in the performance of the multifarious matters with which the Department has to deal. Major Rudland, Chief of the Department who was on leave with the Canadian Expeditionary Force returned from Overseas and resigned 15th of April 1918 on which date I was appointed to the position as above stated.

The several members of the force referred to in previous reports as having been granted leave of absence to proceed overseas with the Canadian Expeditionary Force are returning from time to time.

During the year there have been 26 new appointments and 18 resignations leaving only 8 of the number appointed remaining on the force. It can readily be seen from this the difficulties which confront us in our efforts to afford the public adequate police service; some of the appointees only remaining a few weeks and others only a few months. Advertisements are now being inserted in the newspapers for more men and I have hope very shortly of being able to bring the force up to normal strength.

On the night of the 25th of May, 1918 there was a riot of a rather serious nature due to the arrest of a sailor. An attack was made on the City Hall by a mob consisting of soldiers, sailors and the hoodlum element, who broke into the building and before the mob was brought under control succeeded in setting it on fire and certain documents in the City Engineer's Office and furniture in other parts of the building were destroyed. While the situation was rather serious for a time we were fortunately able with the assistance of the Naval and Military authorities who assembled armed parties, to control the same. For several weeks following there was more or less unrest necessitating the swearing in of "specials" and strong pickets of the Army and Navy patrolled the streets at night ready to avert any similar occurrence.

In reference to this riot the Police Department was complimented by the Chief Commissioner of Police, Ottawa, Sir A. Percy Sherwood, in the following terms:—

*Commissioner of Police, Canada,
Ottawa, June 14th, 1918.*

*Frank Hanrahan, Esq.,
Chief Constable,
Halifax, N. S.*

Re Riot in Halifax, May 25th.
Dear Sir:—I beg to acknowledge yours of the 12th instant, covering report regarding the action of the police in the recent Halifax riot, and in connection therewith venture to express the opinion that your department acted with very capable judgment or the consequences might have been more serious.

*A. P. SHERWOOD,
Chief Commissioner of Police.*

Again on the nights of the 18th and 19th of February 1919, what threatened to become serious riots occurred in a Chinese restaurant on Gottingen Street due to a disturbance caused by a soldier. A mob quickly gathered and considerable damage was done to several of these restaurants and other shops of citizens in the vicinity. The Police however, were able to handle the situation without assistance. Vigorous measures were resorted to and the mob was dispersed, the ringleaders being arrested and convicted.