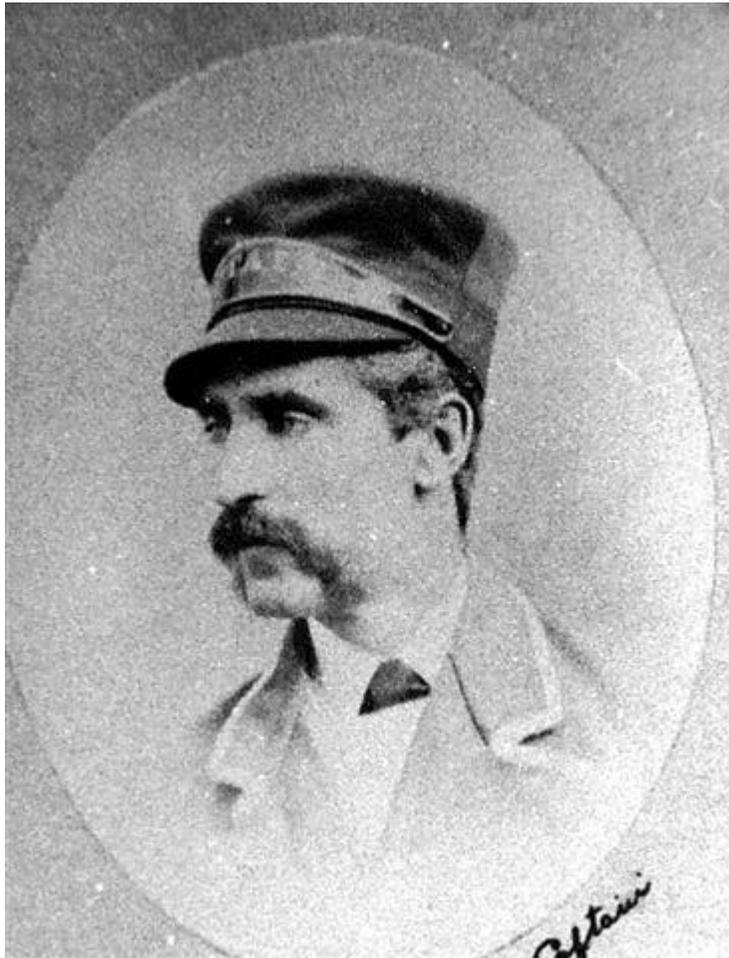


FRANCIS GRAHAM



was born on June 2, 1840 in Ireland and came to Canada with his parents in 1845.

They lived in Montreal until moving to Hamilton in 1853, where he served three years with the Hamilton Fire Department.

In 1860 he moved to Ottawa where he joined the volunteer department.

On December 8, 1874 the City of Ottawa hired sixteen firefighters to work under Fire Chief William Young, and the full-time, paid fire department was born.

Among the original volunteers hired as full-time firefighters was Francis Graham, who gave up his position with the county jail to become the captain or "guardian" (Captain) of Station 3 at Besserer and Nicholas Streets.

On June 24, 1877 a fire broke out in the lumberyard of the E. B. Eddy Mill, which is still located across the river from Ottawa in Hull. A bucket brigade was formed at first, but the fire quickly grew to enormous proportions far beyond their capabilities. The alarm was turned in shortly after seven p.m. and Hull volunteer firefighters responded to the serious fire in the middle of the twenty-acre lumberyard.

Thousands of Ottawa citizens watched the huge fire from the suspension bridge and Parliament Hill. Some went across to help at the fire scene including Chief Young and the Ottawa Fire Department. On arrival the chief, seeing the dangerous situation facing the firefighters, ordered more equipment to battle the inferno that would eventually consume ten acres of piled lumber.

While responding to the fire, Captain Graham and Hose Reel 3 suffered a broken shaft on the horse-drawn hose reel, but fortunately no accident occurred and they continued on to the fire. Captain Walsh of Hose Reel 4 was not as lucky; he was thrown from the reel on Duke Street in almost the exact spot where John Lowry would be killed in a similar accident nineteen years later. Captain Walsh fortunately recovered from his injuries.

The firefighters fought gallantly, and although a strong wind threatened to spread the fire into the city, the blaze was under control and confined to a ten-acre section around ten p.m. Firefighters, including Captain Graham, remained on the scene all night extinguishing hot spots before returning to their stations. The next day Captain Graham was confined to bed suffering from smoke inhalation. His condition slowly deteriorated until he passed away at 11:40 p.m. on Wednesday July 25, 1877.

Captain Francis Graham was a very inventive man. On November 16, 1875 he introduced time-saving equipment to Station 3.

When an alarm was sounded at night the device would automatically turn up the gaslights, stop the clock, and open the door for the horse to take its position in front of the hose reel.

His son John Graham, who was ten years old when his father died, joined the Ottawa Fire Department June 1, 1891, and was assigned to Station Three.

In 1897 his lifetime goal was achieved when he was appointed captain of his father's station. He remained there until 1910 when he was named chief of the department and served until May 27, 1921 when he died suddenly after a short illness at age fifty-four.

John's son William carried on the Graham tradition, serving the department from 1923 until 1953.