

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

New Century Fire Society,

INSTITUTED

DECEMBER 21, 1801.



BOSTON, .

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1801.

Constitution, &c.

Preamble.

WE the Subscribers, for the purpose of securing and protecting the property of each other, when endangered by *Fire*, have associated ourselves, under the title of, The

New Century Fire Society,

and for the more effectual fulfilment of our objects have adopted, and will conform to the following REGULATIONS :

Article FIRST.

THIS Society shall be limited to Thirty Members; whose Meetings shall be on the third Monday of *December, March, June, and September*, at such convenient place as the Secretary may appoint. The *Roll* shall be called at 7 o'clock, P. M. except in the month of *June*, when it shall be called at 8 o'clock : each Member then absent, shall be fined *twenty-five cents* ; and if absent the whole evening, *fifty cents*. All Fines shall be expended for the use of the Society.

Article SECOND.

There shall be a *Moderator* chosen annually, by ballot, at the Meeting in *December* ; three fourths of the votes of the Members present, constituting a choice. He shall not be allowed a vote upon any question before the Society, unless the Members present are equally divided ; in which case he must give a casting vote.

Article THIRD.

There shall be a *Secretary*, who shall also be *Treasurer* for the year ensuing, chosen at the meeting in *De-*

member. That no difficulty may arise in the choice, and that each Member may sustain that office in turn, the election shall be made in the following manner, viz.—Every Member, who has not served before, or paid his fine for not serving, shall draw a lot, (absent Members to be drawn for by the Secretary, and to be fined as if present, and refusing to act) and whoever draws number *one*, shall serve in that capacity, or pay a fine of two Dollars; in which case, lot number *two* shall be called upon, and so on in succession throughout the Society, till one be found to accept.

Article FOURTH.

THE duty of the *Secretary* shall be to keep a fair record of the proceedings of the Society, and an account of all the Receipts and Expenditures, as they are made; which books shall be open to the inspection of the Members, at the quarterly meetings; to give three days notice of the next intended meeting, by sending printed Tickets to each Member; to provide a Supper at those meetings; to collect the Fines, and settle all accounts; to visit the Members previous to each quarterly meeting, for the purpose of examining the Buckets, Bags, &c. at which time he shall request one fourth of all the Members, in alphabetical rotation, to accompany him, and any Member not attending, shall pay a fine of one dollar; he shall also attend all the Meetings of the Society, unless necessarily prevented; in which case, he shall confide the Society's Books to some other Member (at his option) who shall act as Secretary for the time being; and provided he does not procure such Member to officiate for him;—he shall be fined and pay *five dollars*; and the person applied to, refusing to act, shall pay *one dollar*, unless an excuse be given to the satisfaction of the Committee appointed to decide thereon.

Article FIFTH.

THE Secretary is also to settle his Accounts, and de-

liver to his successor in office, all the Books, Papers, and whatever balance he may have in his hands, as Treasurer, belonging to the Society, within thirty days after the expiration of his term of service; and in failure of so doing, he shall pay a fine of *five dollars*, which shall be doubled for every thirty days after, till settled. If he neglect keeping a fair record of the proceedings of the Society, he shall be fined *two dollars*; and if absent at the time of roll call, *one dollar*; and for not demanding each and every fine that may be incurred, *twenty-five cents*; and for neglecting to examine the Buckets, &c. *five dollars*; and for omitting to notify Members to accompany him, or not leaving a notification of the next meeting, he shall be fined for each Member neglected, *one Dollar*. As a compensation for his services, the Secretary shall be exempt from all assessments.

Article SIXTH.

ANY person wishing to become a Member, shall be ballotted for at the quarterly meeting; and must have all the votes of the Members present to be admitted.

Article SEVENTH.

EACH Member, on his admission, after signing the Constitution of this Society, shall provide himself with *two Buckets, two Bags*, one and a half yard long, and one and a half yards round, and *one socket Bed-Key*, which articles shall constantly be kept together, in some conspicuous place in his dwelling-house, and shall never be used except in time of fire, on penalty of *two dollars*, the Buckets and Bags shall bare his name.

Article EIGHTH.

ANY Bucket or Bag lost at a fire, shall be immediately advertised by and at the expense of the owner for three weeks successively; and if he should not recover the article lost, he shall notify the Secretary within ten days after the last advertisement; and it

shall then be replaced at the expense of the Society ; but if he neglect such notification or advertisement, he shall be obliged to furnish the article in question.

Article NINTH.

ANY member who at the time of visitation, is found deficient in any article mentioned in the preceeding regulations, shall forfeit and pay *one dellar* for each Bucket, *fifty cents* for each Bag, and *twenty five cents* for the Bed-Key.

Article TENTH.

THIS Society shall have a Watch-word, whereby to know each other, which shall continue the same until there is cause to change it ; and every member upon his first entrance at each quarterly meeting, shall whisper the same to the Secretary, on penalty of *fifty cents*, and if a member reveals the watch-word to any person not in the Society, he shall be fined and pay *three dollars*.

Article ELEVENTH.

IT shall be the duty of the Members to attend and give their assistance to every fire that may happen in Boston, and to repair with their Buckets, Bags, &c. to the dwelling-house, or store of any Member, that may be in danger ; and they shall use their best endeavors (by his direction if present) to remove and secure all his property ; they shall also be charged with the doors and avenues leading thereto, and shall admit no person, without his giving the watch-word, unless at the request of the Member in danger.

Article TWELFTH.

EACH Member is obliged to send to the Secretary, within seven days after his removal, a minute, *in writing*, of the house or store to which he has removed, or forfeit *one dollar* ; and the Secretary shall insert the same in his next notification on penalty of *one dollar*. And if a Member has a friend to propose for admis-

sion, he must inform the Secretary in writing, at least ten days previous to the quarterly meeting, who shall insert the name of the candidate in the ensuing notification, on penalty of *fifty cents*.

Article THIRTEENTH.

At the meeting in *December*, the following Committee shall be chosen, one consisting of Three Members for the purpose of determining the validity of excuses, made for the nonpayment of fines, &c. from whose decision there shall be no appeal; and to examine the book of articles of each member, whose book at that time, if found incorrect, shall pay *one dollar*—One also consisting of Two Members, whose duty shall be to examine the treasurers accounts, and make report thereon.

Article FOURTEENTH.

EACH and every evening this Society meets, unless business of importance should make a later hour necessary, the reckoning shall be called at ten o'clock, and assessed upon and paid by the members present; every member absent at the payment of the bill, at any of the meetings, shall be charged and pay exclusive of his fine, a sum equal to that paid by the members present.

Article FIFTEENTH.

No Member shall quit the company for the evening, without leave of the Moderator, on penalty of *fifty cents*. Any Member refusing to pay a fine incurred, when requested by the Secretary, shall be reported the next meeting, his fine doubled; and if he continue to refuse paying it, he shall no longer be considered one of this Society; and any Member absenting himself for four successive evenings, without sufficient excuse offered at the fifth, shall cease to be a Member.

Article SIXTEENTH.

It is strictly enjoined on the Members of this Society, that the widow and family of a deceased Mem-

ber, shall continue to have their aid in time of danger, provided she, or they, give due notice of their removal, and keep their buckets, bags, &c. open to inspection.

Article SEVENTEENTH.

AT the request of six Members, the Secretary shall call a special meeting of this Society; and those Members who are absent therefrom, shall be liable to the same fines as at the regular meetings.

Article EIGHTEENTH.

IF any meeting of this Society fall upon a day set apart for National or State purposes, or when there may be a general inconvenience to the Members in meeting, the Moderator and Secretary, or either of them in the absence of the other, shall appoint some other day, as near the third Monday as may be, which shall be considered as regular.

Article NINETEENTH.

As the book of articles of this Society may be lost, or worn out, by some of the Members, they shall be furnished with another book by the Secretary, (complete) paying for the same *fifty cents*. Each Member of this Society shall have his book of articles with him, at every meeting of the same, with entries of removals made agreeable to the last notification, on penalty of *twenty-five cents*.

Article TWENTIETH.

ANY Member wishing to leave this Society, is at liberty so to do, on mentioning to the Secretary, and paying his arrearages; which shall be reported by the Secretary at the next meeting.

Article TWENTY-FIRST.

THE Regulations of this Society, as now adopted, shall not be altered, or changed, without the concurrence of *two thirds* the whole number of Members.