

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 9999 06660 792 8

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2010 with funding from
Boston Public Library

City Document. — No. 2.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

CITY MARSHAL,

FOR 1861.



ROXBURY:

L. B. & O. E. WESTON, PRINTERS, GUILD ROW.

1862.

City of Roxbury.

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, January 13, 1862.

Laid upon the table and ordered to be printed for the use of the City Council.

JOSEPH W. TUCKER, *City Clerk.*

REPORT.



To the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Roxbury :

GENTLEMEN, — I present for your consideration the Annual Report of the Police Department for the year 1861, viz. :—

There have been 1374 arrests in all, 35 of which were for offences committed without the city, leaving 1339 in the city alone; being 85 less than in 1860, and 221 more than in 1859.

The arrests were disposed of as follows, viz. :—

Discharged without complaint.....	781
Sentenced to the House of Correction.....	154
Fined and paid.....	121
Committed for non-payment of fine.....	87
Discharged by Court.....	63
Bound over to the Superior Court.....	34
Sentence postponed.....	26
Put on probation.....	22
Appealed.....	22
Fined and put under bonds.....	20
Placed on file.....	18
Committed for want of bail.....	16
Put under bonds to keep the peace.....	5
Ordered to pay costs.....	5

Total.....1374

The causes of arrests were as follows, viz.: —

Drunkenness.....	684
Assault and battery.....	160
Larceny.....	129
Common drunkenness.....	75
Disturbing the peace.....	65
Vagrancy.....	49
Fruit-pilfering.....	22
Violation of the City Ordinances.....	22
Malicious mischief.....	21
Threatening bodily harm.....	20
Breaking and entering.....	16
Assault on officers.....	14
Highway robbery.....	12
Violation of the Sunday law.....	8
Insanity.....	7
Desertion.....	7
Attempt at larceny.....	7
Not recognizing as witnesses.....	6
Fugitives from justice.....	5
Burglary.....	5
Wilful trespass.....	4
Larceny in a building.....	4
Night-walking.....	3
Truancy.....	3
Fraudulent conveyance.....	3
Stubbornness.....	2
Assault with intent to kill.....	2
Violation of the liquor law.....	2
Refusing to destroy dogs.....	1
Keeping a disorderly house.....	1
Having counterfeit money.....	1
Common brawling.....	1
Indecent exposure.....	1
Receiving stolen goods.....	1
Obstructing horse cars.....	1
Suspicious persons.....	1
Sending a challenge to fight a duel.....	1
Surrendered by bail.....	1
Assault with intent to commit a rape.....	1
Horse stealing.....	1

Carried forward.....1369

Brought forward.....	1369
Common begging.....	1
Interfering with officers.....	1
Larceny from the person.....	1
Breaking and entering with intent to burn.....	1
Murder.....	1
<hr/>	
Total.....	1374

Of the 35 arrests for offences committed without the city, 14 were for larceny, 11 for breaking and entering, 4 for burglary, 4 for fruit-pilfering, 1 for assault and battery, and 1 for refusing to destroy dogs.

It will thus be perceived that the arrests for our own city, for larceny, are reduced to 115, for breaking and entering to 5, for burglary to 1, for fruit-pilfering to 18, and for assault and battery to 159.

Of the 1374 arrests, 1068 were of persons of foreign birth, and of the remainder, 117 were born in Roxbury; 245 were minors; 1153 were males and 221 females.

1124 persons have been provided with lodgings in the Lockup, of which 818 were foreigners; 1006 were males and 118 females; 154 were minors.

The regular force of the Police Department, as at present organized, consists of the Marshal, 7 Day-men, 11 Watchmen, and the Keeper of the Lockup, numbering 19 men in all, whose regular pay for the year amounts to the sum of \$14,873.75, being \$40.75 per day. There are also some Special Policemen, who are on duty, during the Summer, on Sundays, and at such other times as their services may be needed; these are paid only for such services as they render when called upon.

The expenses of the Department for the year have been about \$16,267.04, being \$695.05 less than for the year previous. An additional Watchman was appointed in March last, whose pay for the remainder of the year amounted to \$600. Had the number of Watchmen remained the same, the expenses for the year would have been \$1304.80 less than in 1860.

The earnings of the Police, in the shape of fees, during the year, have been about \$2324.65, while the number of complaints before the Police Court has been 138 less than in 1860. Had the number been equal, the earnings would have been about \$2862.85. The fees all go to the City.

There has been expended for Sunday Police, for Special Police, and for extra services of the regular Police, the sum of \$571, being about 56 per cent. less than in 1860; which decrease is accounted for, in the comparatively small number of incendiary fires, the few burglaries, in extra services which the Police have performed gratuitously, in the disposition to economise, and in the general quiet of our city.

\$239.49 has been expended for assistance rendered in arresting and securing prisoners and conveying them to Dedham after conviction. The balance of expenses is for stationery, food for prisoners, bedding for cells, cleaning, whitewashing, and ordinary repairs in the Police Office and Lockup.

I have received, during the year, for fees, the sum of \$91.15, and paid out for conveyance, assistance, &c., the sum of \$50.24, both of which items are included in the aggregate of expenses and receipts.

The only fees now drawn by the Police, are mittimus fees in cases continued and bound over for further examination, which for the year numbered only 34. The warrant and witness fees, and mittimus fees on final commitments, are all drawn by the Clerk of the Police Court, and by him paid over to the City Treasurer.

The number of complaints before the Police Court has been 19 per cent. less than in 1860, and 25 per cent. less than in 1859. The complaints for assault and battery, and for disturbing the peace, have been 38 per cent. less than in 1860, and 8 per cent. less than in 1859; while for the last six months of each year, 49 per cent. less than in 1860, and 23 per cent. less than in 1859. These facts in-

dicate that the quiet and good order of our city has experienced a manifest improvement, the permanency of which must in a degree be judged by its cause.

Intemperance still continues to be a fruitful source of crime and suffering in our city, which the present liquor law seems inadequate to abate. The facts which have from time to time come under my observation, in relation to prosecutions for violations of the law, convince me that a law granting licenses, under proper restrictions, providing a penalty for selling, or keeping with intent to sell without a license, and for adulteration, also, with a reasonable fine for the first and second convictions, and for all afterwards, leaving it optional with the Courts whether the punishment shall be a fine or imprisonment, and also providing a way for obtaining evidence, would greatly diminish the present evils of intemperance, and be sustained by a large majority of the citizens.

If such a law can be framed, it does seem to be in accordance with the dictates of wisdom and humanity that it should be done.

Our city has been very fortunate during the past year in regard to incendiary fires, which have been of frequent occurrence in some of the neighboring cities and towns.

Upon investigation of the circumstances attending the fires in our city for the last three years, I am firmly of the opinion that quite a large per cent. of them has been the result of attempts to defraud insurance companies; and had the law in relation to fire inquests been still in force, I believe that some of this class of incendiaries might have been brought to justice, and others deterred from making attempts. It may be that this law was abused in some places, but I am not aware that it ever has in Roxbury, where its repeal seems to be productive of evil.

The number of juvenile offenders in our city seems rather to be on the increase. Some of these commit offences which would send older persons to the State's

Prison. They do not attend school, but go prowling about, entering the premises of the citizens, and stealing what they can find in their way, even not hesitating to break open houses. Some of these boys are too young to send to the House of Correction, and if they are simply fined, and their fines paid, it is their parents and friends who are punished. In some instances they are let off on probation, which seems almost a farce.

These boys, though bad enough in themselves, are continually exerting a bad influence, and leading others astray; and in this connection I cannot but endorse the well-timed remarks of the Chairman of the School Committee upon truancy, and add that the experience of the Police is, that while the "Truant School" was in successful operation, the number of juvenile offences was diminished, and that since the school was discontinued there has been a marked increase.

As one of the means for lessening crime, I cannot but express my wish that the "Truant School" may be again established; and should the City Council in its wisdom determine to do so, I would most respectfully recommend that the Truant Officer, whose business it would be to make complaints, should not be a member of the Police Department.

Dealers in old junk are quite numerous in our city. Many of them are believed to be irresponsible persons, who do not hesitate to purchase stolen property from a class of boys who will steal whenever they can find purchasers for the stolen articles.

There is now no way of regulating the purchase and sale of old junk and second-hand articles, except by the passage of a City Ordinance, in conformity with sections 25, 26 and 27 of chapter 88 of the General Statutes; and I would respectfully call your attention to the expediency of passing such an Ordinance.

The keeping of swine and goats, and the collecting of

swill by unauthorized persons, is a source of great annoyance to many of our citizens, and I am frequently receiving complaints upon the subject.

In view of the hard times and scarcity of work, the City Government resolved to be as lenient as possible in enforcing the Ordinances in relation to these offences. In accordance with their suggestions and advice, I have refrained from commencing prosecutions. Advantage has been taken of this leniency, and the small inch has now grown to be a large ell; swine being quite numerous, and in some localities in our city, goats may be seen in large flocks, paying no respects to good manners and division lines. Whether this leniency shall longer continue, is for your Honorable Board to determine.

I have received frequent complaints from citizens who have been annoyed by the barking and biting of dogs; and it seems extremely desirable that some quiet method, different from the present, may be adopted for destroying the many worse than useless curs now infesting our city.

Many of the canine race have breathed their last in our city during the last year; but there are now quite too many who "still live." The records of the "Canine Undertaker" show that he has buried 687 dogs, besides 968 cats, 87 hogs, 10 goats, and 1 fish. Quite a large proportion of these dead animals have been found in localities where they would soon become offensive, if not taken care of.

There has been much extra labor performed the past year by the Police, for which they receive no pay. And it gives me great pleasure here to say, that whenever I have called upon them to render extra services gratuitously, they have responded with cheerfulness and alacrity.

The Police Office, in the day time, is under the charge of one of my Assistants, who keeps the daily record, and in the absence of the Marshal gives all needful directions; and without detracting from the merits of any other mem-

ber of the department, I will here say that I have entire confidence in his faithfulness, and efficiency as an officer, and his character as a man.

At night the office is under the charge of one of the Day-men, whose business it is to attend to all calls, and give all needful information to the Watchmen relative thereto. Some of the Watchmen call at the office each hour during the night, for the purpose of reporting matters of importance, which may have come to their knowledge during the night, and of attending to calls for their services.

One of the Watchmen remains at the office during the day, for the purpose of attending to all needful calls. Each Day-man spends fifty-two nights at the office during the year, and each Watchman half as many days; these services are all rendered gratuitously.

The Keeper of the Lockup has the charge of the prisoners during the night, and of the cells, and also acts as Officer of the Court. He is a faithful and an efficient officer, and a humane man; the latter qualification being indispensable for an officer having the charge of confined prisoners, and persons who apply for lodgings in the cells.

In my humble opinion, the Roxbury Police, as a whole, are as faithful and efficient a body of men as can be found in any police organization. I have ever found them willing to do their duty faithfully. As a body they have merited my confidence, and I cheerfully award them their just meed of praise.

The duties of the Police are of a various, and often of an arduous and dangerous character, — requiring men of energy, efficiency, coolness, and courage; not merely physical courage, but a high *moral* courage, which fears not to go straight forward in the path of duty, alike insensible to flattery and to frowns. A man who lacks moral courage can never be fitted for a good Police Officer, no matter what may be his other qualifications.

Policemen are expected to put up with insulting remarks — this they are willing to do ; — and in the discharge of their duties they are subjected to severe personal assaults, often endangering their limbs, and even their lives, for which offences our Courts inflict altogether too light penalties. To inflict no more punishment for assaulting an officer while in the discharge of his duty, than for a simple assault and battery on a citizen, is absurd and unjust, and has a tendency to encourage disturbances and breaches of the peace, rendering the person of the citizen less secure.

I have been frequently importuned to recommend men for situations on the Police. In their selection I have ever had but one object in view, viz., to get the best men for the situations. And in justice to myself, I am free to say that, so far as I am concerned, in no single instance has an applicant's political opinions had the slightest weight in his appointment or rejection. I have ever considered the Police Department too important an organization to be trifled with in this respect.

If our citizens expect to maintain an efficient and trustworthy police department, Police Officers must be made to feel that they are to be judged by their characters as men and officers, and not by their political preferences. It is no objection to a Police Officer that he has a political opinion of his own, which he lets be known in a proper and becoming manner at the ballot-box. But Police Officers should refrain from taking part in political discussions, or from mingling in political strifes, bearing in mind that by so refraining, they can better preserve their usefulness and efficiency.

The citizens are all equally interested in the maintenance of order and the suppression of crime, and a man's politics gives him no superior claim to the protection of the laws, or to the services of the Police ; for the highwayman knocks his victim down, without asking him how he voted — the burglar, when he breaks into a dwelling, does so without

inquiring the politics of its owner—the incendiary, when he sets fire to a building, cares not whether it is the property of an old-line whig, or a new-made republican—the thief will steal the property of our late President, just as quick as he will that of the most radical abolitionist,—and the drunken rowdy is just as ready to fight a union man, as a republican or a democrat.

It is crime, and not politics, with which the Police have to deal, and the preservation of peace and good order in the community, is of vastly more importance than any political organization.

I can see no reason why the Police should not be as independent of all political changes, as the Judges of our Courts.

Some apprehension was felt, in the early part of the Summer, that the troubled state of our country might lead to disturbances in our own city, which would endanger its peace. But no such fears now exist; and it may well be a subject of congratulation, that the close of the year has brought with it so much of peace, quiet, and good order here, while in many of the cities of our common country it is otherwise.

The number of Police is comparatively small for the amount of territory to be looked after; and under other circumstances, and a more prosperous state of the finances of our city, I should very likely recommend an increase of the number. But the city was never in a more quiet state than at the present time; and so long as this quiet continues, I see no good reason why we cannot get along without adding to the number.

It has been my practice, whenever appearances seem to indicate the need, to put out a secret watch for the special purpose of watching the movements of incendiaries and burglars, more particularly the former; by this means some incendiaries have already been caught in the act, and I have good reason for believing that others have been de-

tered, and much valuable property saved from fire, among which are some of our public school-houses.

The most experienced and trustworthy men have been selected for this watch, and they have conducted their movements with the utmost secrecy and caution.

The incendiary may not so much fear the regular watch, whose movements can be seen; but when he feels that there are men on the watch for him, and knows not who they are, or where to find them, he hesitates long before setting a fire. And the burglar, when he finds men moving about in a mysterious manner, not in the public streets alone, but in the yards and premises of citizens, he feels that it is not safe for him to operate, and seeks other localities for his depredations.

I am firmly of the opinion, that the employment of a secret Police has been productive of the most satisfactory results, not only in the saving of property and prevention of crime, but in avoiding the necessity for a large permanent increase of the regular force.

Before our Police Court, the rights of the poorest and humblest are as much respected as those of the wealthy and influential. I believe our Judge to be conscientious in his decisions, and his leanings are ever on the side of leniency.

I must bear witness to the faithfulness and competency of the Clerk of the Police Court, who is ever willing and ready to perform his part. His labors during the past year have been very much increased, owing to an increase of about 36 per cent. of the civil cases.

The Police have had frequently to call in the aid of the City Physician to dress the wounds of prisoners and others brought to the Lockup. His services have ever been rendered promptly and with skill.

My personal relations with the members of the Government, during the past year, have been of a pleasing character; and my thanks are certainly due them, for the

cordial manner in which they have sustained me in my efforts to preserve the peace and quiet of our city.

My thanks are also due to all who have in any way aided me, or the Police Department, in the discharge of duty.

Respectfully submitted.

BENJ. MERIAM, *City Marshal.*

Roxbury, Jan., 1862.



