

Far-Seeing, Progressive
Men Have Headed the
Departments in the . . .

City's Official FAMILY

● TORRANCE . . . on Review

City incorporated in May, 1921.
Has had 10 mayors, 27 councilmen.
John Dennis held post of mayor for longest period, six years.
Present mayor, William H. Stanger, has been on council since February 13, 1934.
Harry H. Dolley has been city treasurer since incorporation, while A. H. Bartlett has served as city clerk since 1922.
Police department consists of chief, nine officers.
Fire department has three combination trucks.
Fire loss, 1935, was but 12 cents per inhabitant.



● First Meeting of the City Council in New City Hall. Left to Right Are: Grover C. Whyte, Press Representative; Councilmen Tom F. McGuire and James E. Hitchcock; City Clerk A. H. Bartlett; Mayor William H. Stanger; Mrs. Ellen Blacksher, Secretary to City Clerk; Councilmen W. H. Tolson and George V. Powell; City Attorney Charles T. Rippe; and City Engineer Frank R. Leonard. Photo by Haig and Haig.

"He took me into one house that was for sale. 'Like it? Satisfied? All right, we'll take it. I've got to get back to the plant.'

"So that was the story of our move to Torrance. But once he got down here he grew to love the city—and so do I."

Fitzhugh Next Mayor

Proctor remained as mayor until April 17, 1922, when he was succeeded by J. M. Fitzhugh, who served exactly one year, being followed by W. H. Gilbert. R. R. Smith was next mayor, beginning his term April 21, 1924, and being followed April 6, 1925, by Robert J. Deininger.

Beginning April 19, 1926, John Dennis held the post, and was technically the first mayor of the city, for prior to August 2, 1927, the official title was "president of the board of trustees." Dennis continued in office until April 18, 1932, being succeeded, after the longest term in this office, by William T. Klusman, who was removed from the position September 26, 1933, and succeeded by C. Earl Conner.

His appointment as postmaster necessitated Conner's resignation and Scott R. Ludlow was appointed to succeed him, February 6, 1934, holding the office until last April 20, when William H. Stanger assumed it.

Boards of Trustees

TRUSTEES, or councilmen as they have been termed since August 2, 1927, have seen a number of incumbents to keep up the legal number of five. Necessarily each mayor has been a councilman, but many

have been the changes in the official family, due to removal from the city, death, pressure of business or switches in the terms of office.

The first board of trustees was appointed to serve for 11 months, until the first regular city election could be held. It included, besides Proctor, W. H. Gilbert, R. R. Smith, Joseph F. Stone and James M. Fitzhugh.

Voters this year elected Mayor Stanger and Councilmen James E. Hitchcock, W. H. Tolson, George V. Powell and Tom F. McGuire.

Long Terms of Service

ROBERT J. DEININGER was first city clerk, with Albert H. Bartlett chosen for the position at the first election and continuing in the office ever since. Even longer service is that of Harry H. Dolley, who has been city treasurer ever since incorporation.

First city attorney was Perry G. Briney, while Charles T. Rippe has held the post since December, 1933. H. R. Postle was first city engineer, now held by Frank R. Leonard since June 1, 1926. William Gascoigne has been superintendent of streets since incorporation. A. G. Pruitt was first city recorder. City Judge Robert F. Lessing has served since October, 1934.

Early citizens of Torrance must have been particularly good, for while Ben Olsen was appointed marshal when the city was incorporated it was not until August 1, 1921, that he made his first arrest. The force then consisted of Chief Olsen and a night watchman.

G. M. Calder, present chief, assumed the office May 5, 1926, and under his direction the force has grown until today he has nine men.

Fire Department Grows

GROWTH of the fire department parallels that of the city. First chief when the department was organized, early in 1913, was H. H. McManus, and the apparatus consisted of a hand-drawn hose reel. When the first tiny chemical truck was received, Ben F. Hannebrink was named chief, September 16, 1918.

With the coming of the first "big" truck in 1923, a regular, paid fireman was employed. This was Alan B. Stevenson, who became chief when Hannebrink resigned, October 24, 1933, after 15 years of service.

So well protected against fire is Torrance, and so well are the men trained that the per capita fire loss, from 1930

to 1934, averaged but 30 cents per inhabitant, while in 1935 this was reduced to the phenomenally low figure of 12 cents. The department averages 48 fire runs per year and has 220 hydrants at its service.

Pride in their city and pride in the new homes which every department is about to assume is responsible, in part, for the pride which every citizen of Torrance feels in its representatives, elected or appointed.



● Harry H. Dolley, Treasurer Since City Was Incorporated.

INCORPORATED as a city in May, 1921, only nine years after its first building had risen from sand-swept potato lunes, Torrance granted the honor of being her first mayor to a man who had struggled along with the infant community ever since its founding—George A. Proctor.

He had come to the new location with the first workers from the Los Angeles plant of the Union Tool Company, and had risen to the position of plant superintendent. But it must be confessed that, like many Torrance workers of today, he retained his residence in Los Angeles for several years after the change in plant location.

Let Mrs. Proctor tell the story.

Didn't Like Torrance

"I REMEMBER when we first came down to Torrance and saw the new city-to-be," said she. "George looked at me and I looked at him. 'Humph,' he declared. 'I wouldn't live here if they gave me the place!'"

"So I just bided my time. I knew he would get tired of rising at 4 a. m. and riding to work, then getting home at 8 or 9 at night. Sure enough, after a couple of years he had come to Torrance with him again. He was very busy at the plant and there were no houses for rent in Torrance. In fact, all the houses here were as different and distinctive, one from the other, as a row of sausages hanging from a string."



● City Judge Robert F. Lessing.



● Central Torrance Fire Equipment.



● Waleria Engine Company.



● Police Department.