

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NO 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

B. W.

*New York,*

July 6th, 1896.

Hon. Wm. L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

Allow me to acknowledge receipt of your favor of the  
3rd inst and to state that there are unsafe cases against these premises.

No. 26 West 118th Street, the one in which Mr. M. Rowe resides,  
has been decided by the Board of Survey, appointed in this matter,  
as not unsafe. The others are receiving attention.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't of B'ldgs.

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS.

NO 220 FOURTH AVENUE,

S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,



A.E.H.

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY.

*M.*  
*New York* July 27th, 1896.

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

Enclosed please find copy of report forwarded to Mr. Thomas J. Kelly, 2078 Eighth Avenue, in answer to yours of July 24th in re. unsafe condition of flat house on Bradhurst Avenue.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't. of B'ldgs.

(Enclosure)



A.E.H.

July 27th, 1896.

Mr. Thomas J. Kelly,

2078 Eighth Avenue, City.

Dear Sir:-

Yours of July 23rd, to His Honor the Mayor, was referred to this Department for action. We have an unsafe case against building in question on the West side of Bradhurst Avenue, 75' North of 153rd Street, Elizabeth A. Warby, owner, James Shanks, Agent, and if immediate action is not taken to make said building safe, this Department will take the legal steps to enforce it.

Yours truly,

Sup't. of B'ldgs.

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# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,

S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

H.J.H.

*New York*, July 31st, 1896.

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

It gives me pleasure to submit to you the following statement comparing the work done by the Department of Buildings during the first six months of this year with the work done the first six months of the year 1894, which year was the last of the previous administration. No comparison is made for the first six months of 1895, for the reason that during three months of that time the Department was not under my administration, but the first six months of my administration - in 1895 - commencing March 26th also show a large increase over that of any previous year.

	1894.	1896.	Increase over 1894.
No. of Plans for Buildings Acted Upon	2,473	3,845	1,372
" " Exams. made of Iron and Steel	No Record	90,946	-----
" " Unsafe Buildings Reported	694	1,991	1,297
" " Notices Issued	7,279	27,426	20,147
" " Inspections of Passenger Elevators	1,639	2,960	1,321
" " Unsafe Bldgs. Made Safe or Taken Down	603	1,577	974
" " Defective Passenger Elevators Reported	54	757	703
" " " " " " Made			
Safe on Notice from Department	49	671	622

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,



H.J.H.

*New York*, July 31st, 1896.

2. To. Hon. William L. Strong.

	1894	1896	Increase over 1894.
No. of Cases disposed of by Attorney.	1,767	2,817	1,050
Money collected by Attorney	\$2,383.55	\$11,643.75	\$9,260.20

The foregoing figures are taken from the records of this Department. As no record was kept of the examinations made of iron work and steel <sup>work</sup> previous to my administration, it is impossible to state specifically the increase in the number of such examinations. But I know as a matter of fact that it has been very large; and the result has been a very great improvement in the quality of cast iron used in this City. It has been stated that the improvement amounts to from 40 to 50 per cent. This is only one instance of the improvement in the construction of buildings that has taken place under my administration, and it has only been possible to accomplish this work by constant care and attention and by introducing business methods in the conduct of this Department.

Since I became Superintendent I have established in the Department, an Engineering and Examining Bureau, and Ironwork Bureau, a Bureau of Special Inspectors, a Bureau of Messengers, and thoroughly reorganized the Bureau of Plumbing Inspectors, and the Bureau of Building Inspectors.

The systemization of work, thus established has placed direct



# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,



H.J.H.

*New York,* July 31st, 1896.

3. To Hon. William L. Strong.

responsibility on the men and has enabled the Department to do more and efficient work than ever before. Rules and regulations for the government of the employees of the Department have been promulgated, and a new and more improved system for keeping the records established. Forms of petitions, certificates and affidavits have been changed and improved, and a system of postal communication has been instituted, and has proved of great convenience and utility. Fire proof vaults for the storing of original documents of 1895 and 1896 have been constructed, and such documents properly stored and indexed. Also all old records have been collected together and packed systematically in cases. This matter was a task requiring considerable time and labor; the number of documents indexed being estimated to be from 300,000 to 500,000. But the result has been greatly to facilitate the working of the Department, in that documents can now readily be obtained when needed.

To provide the proper space for the storing of these documents and to facilitate the work of the employees of the Department, it was found necessary to lease the 7th floor and two additional offices in the building at No. 220 Fourth Avenue.

The employees of the Department have all been uniformed, and the result has been to greatly increase their efficiency and discipline, and has put a stoppage to the practice, formerly quite prevalent, of frequenting saloons, race tracks, &c., instead of attending to their work.

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,

S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,



H.J.H.

*New York,* July 31st, 1896.

4. To Hon. William L. Strong.

A branch office of the Department has been established at the junction of Third and Courtlandt Avenues, above the Harlem River. The institution of this branch office resulted not only in facilitating the work of the Department, and in a great saving of time to the employees thereof, but also has proved of great convenience to the public, and much satisfaction has been expressed thereat by the residents of New York City, living North of the Harlem River. All the above and many other details can be given and proved to show good results.

I have the honor to remain,

Respectfully yours,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Superintendent of Buildings.



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INDEXES

July 1st, 1898.

COPY.

DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS

No. 220 Fourth Avenue,

S. W. Corner 18th St.

New York July 10th, 1896.

Stevenson Constable Esq

Supt Bdgs

Dear Sir

I recommend that Inspector T. Keller be dismissed for causes as stated below.

1st Reporting on April 6 - on Alt 557/96 - on 258 262 Sixth Ave including 60 - 62 West 17th St - that foundation walls were 16" and 20" thick of brick and stone whereas the same were only 12" thick of brick.

2nd Not reporting westerly wall of N. B. 1011/96 on N. side of 106 St 200 ft E of Amsterdam Ave, said wall is 13 1/4" thick at first story instead of 16" as called for by law and approved papers.

3rd General neglect of duty

Respectfully

(Signed) F. M. Rutherford

(Signed) J. O'Connor  
Insp.

-----oOo-----



COPY.

A.E.H.

July 10th, 1896.

Mr. Thomas Keller,  
Inspector.

Dear Sir:-

This is to inform you that I hereby remove you from the position of Inspector of Buildings in the Department of Buildings, said removal to take effect tomorrow, July 11th, 1896.

The cause of your removal is,

- 1st. For making unreliable and careless reports.
- 2nd. Neglect of duty and disobedience of the rules and regulations governing the Department of Buildings.
- 3rd. Inattention to work on your district.

Further, you are directed to turn over to the Chief Clerk, Mr. Class, forthwith, your badge, insignia, journals, copy of the Building Laws, "Sun Copying" pencil, papers, one set each of overcoat, coat and vest buttons, and any other property of the Department which may be in your possession.

Yours truly,

(Signed) STEVENSON CONSTABLE,

Sup't of B'ldgs.

In re

T H O M A S K E L L E R

---

Hearing, July 14th, 1896, at ten o'clock, A. M.

Department of Buildings, Superintendent's Office.

Present:

Superintendent

E. S. Hosmer, Assistant Attorney

Frank M. Rutherford, Second Deputy.

John O'Connor

Bertha Wolf

Thomas Keller



COPY.

Department of Street Cleaning,

City of New York,

New York, July 24th, 1896.

Stevenson Constable, Esq.,

Sup't. of Buildings,

220 Fourth Avenue, City.

Dear Sir:-

In reply to your letter of the 23rd instant would say that the following is a copy of a letter sent Mr. Keller January 29th, 1895:-

"Mr. Thomas Keller,

"371 Manhattan Ave., City.

"Dear Sir:-

"I find that the work you are doing does not evince, in my judgment, a capacity for the delicate functions with which you have been charged.

"I beg, therefore, that you will send me Your resignation to take effect on the first day of February, 1895.

"Yours respectfully,

"Geo. E. Waring, Jr.,

"Commissioner".

Yours very truly,

(Signed) F. M. Gibson

Deputy and Acting Commissioner.

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# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

B. W.

*New York,* August 5th, 1896.

*M.*

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

In answer to yours of the 4th inst, in regard to communication of Thomas Keller, I enclose you, I think, all that is necessary in this matter.

The said Keller was discharged from this Department for neglect of duty, disobedience to the rules and regulations of the Department, and misconduct on July 10th, of the current year.

All matters pertaining to his discharge were in accordance with the law and custom of this Department, and any further information on record here, I shall gladly give you.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't of B'ldgs.

(Enc.4)

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,

S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

B. W.

*New York,* August 5th, 1896.

*M.*

Hon. Wm. L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

In accordance with understanding, in regard to complaint of the American Grocery Co., West Broadway and Hudson St., I examined into the same and can report as follows:

As to their statement that "application was filed in this Department on the 10th day of July and up to present date had not been passed on and approved by this Department ", the facts of the case are:

Application was filed in this Department July 20th, building inspected July 23rd, and reported upon and ready for approval if proper amendments had been made, on August 1st. Proper notice was sent to their representative to that effect. Amendments to said application were not made until August 4th, on which date said plans were approved on condition that the arches to the first story facade of said building were found to be properly built.

Awaiting seeing representative of said Company who agreed to call at 4.30 P. M. today, I am,

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't of B'ldgs.



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OF BUILDINGS

THE OFFICE

R 18TH ST

August 28th, 1896.

M.

New York.

-1118 1896

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NO 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

B. W.

*New York,*

August 12, 1890.

*M.*

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

In answer to your favor of the 10th instant, permit me to assure you that I will take pleasure in co-operating with you in your earnest endeavor to give efficient and economical government to the City of New York.

I shall use every endeavor in my power to limit to the lowest figure possible the appropriation necessary for next year's administration of this Department, to conduct it as it should be, to carry out the law and properly protect the public.

I am,

Very respectfully yours,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't of B'ldgs.



24.

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1000 100 1000

C O P Y .

#134 West 18th Street,

New York June 13th '96.

Mr. Stevenson Constable,

Supt. Building Dept.,

18th St. & 4th Ave., City.

Dear Sir;-

Captain Brown and the writer were examining Blessing's liquor store, corner of 8th Ave. and 39th Street, a few nights since and we come to the conclusion that the end of the building Blessing occupies is built against the wall of my house with nothing excepting lath and plaster. There does not seem to be any wall. As my wall is an independent one I do not quite understand where they got their authority for building in that manner and this is probably the reason why every noise in his saloon is so plainly heard in my house. If within your province, will you please examine the construction of that rear wall for the purpose of ascertaining if the owner can be made to change. An independent wall there would relieve us very much.

Yours truly,



C O P Y .

#134 West 18th Street,

New York July 22nd 1896.

Mr. Stevenson Constable,

My dear Mr. Constable:-

The collection of the \$250. fine for the violation of the building law will not help my difficulty. Blessing's building is supported by my westerly wall. The law requires an eight inch wall. The blind wall he has constructed is a violation of the building laws. What I want to know is, can you or will you compel the owner of that building to construct a wall in compliance with the law? That is the only thing that will help me.

Yours truly,

C O P Y .

#134 West 18th Street,  
New York July 27th 1896.

Mr. Stevenson Constable,  
Supt. Building Dept.,  
18th St. & 4th Ave., City.

My dear Mr. Constable:-

I have not received any reply to my letter of the 22nd. Won't you be kind enough to inform me what you will do regarding the matter in question. Everytime we have a shower moisture appears in our basement and I find that many of the walls and ceilings in the west apartment of the Lakewood, which have been decorated within four weeks, have cracked, indicating that the west side of the house must be settling. Unless your department can give this matter immediate attention, I shall have to put it in the hands of an attorney.

I shall arrange to-day to meet Mr. Abbott to-morrow to talk over matters as promised.

Yours truly,



C O P Y .

#134 West 18th Street,  
New York Aug. 11th 1896.

Hon. Stevenson Constable,  
Supt. Building Dept.,  
18th St. & 4th Ave., City.

My dear Mr. Constable:-

Early last week I had a conversation with you regarding the construction of the L connecting Blessing's liquor store with my house, 39th Street and 8th Avenue. You referred the matter to your attorney Mr. Dahlgreen, who promised to inform me by note that day what your department would do. Although he faithfully promised, he has not given me the information. I do not propose to be fooled with.

Notwithstanding Mr. Dahlgreen's opinion, I feel pretty well satisfied that the owner of that property has no right to put a building up against my property, omitting the construction of a proper wall, and I believe that is a violation of the building laws and if it is, I believe it is the duty of your department to correct the violation, and I propose to have it corrected.

If I do not get some satisfaction from your department before to-morrow noon, I shall go to a higher authority. I wish to avoid all controversies. This matter has been in abeyance for weeks and up to date all I have asked of your department was to state whether it was in your province to make the correction and what you could and would do regarding the matter. I have not been able up to the present time to bring the point to an issue. Now, if Mr. Dahlgreen does not propose to keep his word with me, I propose to force the issue. As I said before, I do not propose to be fooled with any longer. The way I view this case, it makes no difference whether the violation occurred under your administration or under the preceding one. If it is a violation, it is a

2.

violation.. That is all there is to it. I would not force the matter were it not for the circumstances connected with the case which I have thoroughly explained to you.

I am at the mercy of a Tammany Hall politician and Tammany Hall courts and hence I am compelled to demand the enforcement of the law through your department, and I want to do it pleasantly through you, if possible.

I do not agree with Mr. Dahlgreen that any man has a right to construct any kind of a building using my wall without my permission. If the owner of this property had constructed the L and had left a space between his building and mine, that would have been a different thing, but my wall forms the support for the end of his room. He has simply stolen his support, contrary to the building laws. In this case I understand an 8 inch wall is required, and if that is so, I want your department to take the necessary proceedings to compel the owner to construct a wall there such as the law requires, and I am going to insist upon my present position because the present construction of that building is ruining my property, not only because of the character of the construction but also of the business carried on in the place.

Yours truly,



# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NO 220 FOURTH AVENUE,

S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,



V.F.

*New York,*

Aug. 13, 1896.

~~OFFICE OF ATTORNEY~~

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D. J. Osgood, Esq.,

134 West 18th Street, City.

S i r :-

I am in receipt of yours of the 11th instant,  
and have noted its contents. I have forwarded it  
to my Attorney to answer.

I am,

Very truly yours,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Superintendent of Buildings.

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,

S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,



V.P.

*New York,*

August 13, 1896.

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY.

D. J. Osgood, Esq.,

134 West 18th Street, City.

Sir: -

Your communication of the 11th instant addressed to Hon. Stevenson Constable, Superintendent of Buildings, has been handed to me by him, and in reply thereto I beg to say that this Department has not been organized, and is not being conducted, for the purpose of aiding anybody in their individual schemes, or to assist individuals in any controversy which they may have with their neighbors.

This Department has been organized, and is being conducted, for the purpose of enforcing the laws relating to the erection and alteration of buildings in the City of New York, and for that purpose only.

Several weeks ago the Superintendent of Buildings referred to me the question arising with reference to the premises occupied by Mr. Blessing,



# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

№ 220 FOURTH AVENUE,

S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,



*New York,* \_\_\_\_\_

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY.

To D.J.O. -2-

adjoining your building, and purely as a matter of favor, I promised to notify you what action this Department would take. Through inadvertence the matter slipped my memory, but a short memorandum from you calling my attention to the matter would have received from me the information which I had promised.

Every person who has any business to transact with the Building Department, or with the Office of the Attorney to the Building Department, is treated with the same courtesy and consideration that he would receive, and would expect to receive, in his private dealings with individuals. Nobody is trifled or fooled with, and the inference contained in your letter that you have been fooled with in this matter is based entirely upon imagination, and without any facts to support it. On the contrary, after reading your communication of the 11th instant, I have come to the conclusion that you have received entirely too much consideration.

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,



*New York,*

OFFICE OF ATTORNEY.

To D.J.G. -3-

I have rendered to the Superintendent of Buildings my opinion as to this controversy, and it is entirely unnecessary for me to again review the matter.

There is no necessity for your writing letters such as I have before me, or to threaten this Department in any way. It will avail you nothing. This Department has decided upon the course it will pursue in this matter, and that course will be followed out.

If there are any proceedings that you wish to take you are at perfect liberty to go ahead.

I am,

Respectfully yours,

*John Vinton Dally*

Attorney to the Department of Buildings.



COPY.

#134 West 18th Street,

New York Aug. 14th 1896.

Mr . John Vinton Dahlgreen, Stty.,  
Department of Buildings,  
City.

Dear Sir:-

Replying to your favor of the 13th will say, I have never asked a favor of the building department. The enforcement of law is not a favor but a duty for which every employee in the department of buildings is remunerated by taxpayers. I feel fully competent to take care of my own business without asking favors of anybody. I have tried to have the building department define their duty and powers in the Blessing matter.

I asked the superintendent to tell me what he could do regarding the matter. Now if your department is being conducted for the purpose of enforcing the laws relating to the erections of buildings, then it certainly is within your province to tell a man what his rights are in a case of this kind. I have had no less than five or six interviews with Mr. Constable regarding this matter and several letters have been written. If he has not acquainted you with the facts or consulted you regarding the matter, it is not my fault.

If I understand the matter correctly, you are paid by this city to give an opinion on the laws relating to the construction of buildings and not on letters sent to the department which touch your dignity.

Your assertion that I have tried to use the building department for personal ends is not true. Any attorney for the building department of this city who gives way to personal feelings sufficiently to write a communication such as you have sent to me is

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unfit for such a position. You seem to forget the fact that you are a public officer. Am sorry you have compelled me to remind you of it.

Yours truly,



# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NO 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

BW

New York, Aug. 18, 1896.

M.

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your two communications of the 17th inst, requesting report as to premises Third Avenue and 31st Street and #302 Bowery. This matter will be given immediate attention and report made to you as soon as possible.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't of B'ldgs.

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knowledge receipt of your two  
questing report as to premises  
S. Bowery. This matter will be  
made to you as soon as possible.  
Respectfully,

Sup't of Bldgs.



# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NO 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

BW

*New York,* Aug. 21st, 1896.

*M.*

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

In answer to your favor of the 18th inst, I have examined into same and find that owing to the absence of the Violation Clerk, who had charge of these matters in the Department, that the error was made in filing violation against Grammar School #54 in 104th St and Amsterdam Ave., as plans and specifications had been filed and approved in this Department at the time when said violation was placed.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't of B'ldgs.

26.

AND STAFF, 1995



February 27/96.

Mr. J. J. McArdle,

#634 East 145th St., City.

Dear Sir:--

This is to inform you that I hereby remove you from the position of Inspector of Buildings in the Department of Buildings, said removal to take effect on February 29th, 1896.

The cause of your removal is failure to properly perform your official duties, for entering saloons while on duty between the hours of nine and five o'clock, for not attending to your official duties during that time by being absent from your district, and for violation of the rules and regulations governing the Department of Buildings, on various occasions.

Further, you are directed to turn over to First Deputy Vreeland forthwith your badge, insignia, journals, copy of the Building Laws, "Sun Copying" pencil, papers, and any other property of the Department which may be in your possession.

Yours &c.,

Superintendent of Buildings.

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

BW

New York, Aug. 21st, 1894/89

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

In answer to complaint of August 19th, forwarded to you by  
J. J. McArdle, #634 E. 145th St., in re buildings West Side of Brook  
Ave. 50' N. of 146th St., same will be examined into at once,

Mr. McArdle is an ex-inspector of this Department, and was  
discharged by me under charges as per enclosed copy.

I will report to you as soon as examination is made into  
the complaint forwarded by him.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup'tm of B'ldgs.

(Enclosure)



Department of Buildings,  
Office of Attorney,  
No. 220 Fourth Avenue,  
NEW YORK.

B

Mr. Joseph F. Becker,

381 Park Avenue,

city

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,



A.E.H.

*New York,* Aug. 21st, 1896.

Office of Attorney.

Mr. Joseph F. Becker,  
381 Park Avenue, City.

Dear Sir:-

The inspector reports that the violation mentioned in notice 1213/96 affecting the premises 115 East 54th Street has not yet been removed. The plans for light and ventilation filed by you have been disapproved. Unless this violation is removed at once by removing one of the families from this house so that it shall be occupied by only two families, or by amending the plans filed so that they will be approved, legal proceedings will be instituted against you.

This matter has already been pending for a long time, and I cannot consent to any further delay. I shall expect to hear from you by return mail as to your intention in the matter.

Yours respectfully,

*John Milton Dahlgren*  
Attorney to the Department of Buildings.

Viol. 1213/96  
20/275  
Dic. L.V.



In the Matter of the Case against Jos. F. Becker,  
Affecting the Premises, 115 East 54th St.  
-----oOo-----

Application #615, Alt./'95, was filed in this Department on April 11th, 1895, for permission to alter the said building to be occupied as a dwelling for two families.

This building is at present occupied by three families in direct violation of the plans submitted to and approved by the Superintendent of Buildings.

On February 20th, 1896, this fact was reported by the district inspector and a violation was filed against the said building.

On March 20th, 1896, a notice was served on Jos. F. Becker, the owner, notifying him that the building was occupied by three families, whereas the plans approved by the Superintendent of Buildings called for a private dwelling, and that no plans for the light and ventilation for a tenement house had been approved by the Superintendent of Buildings.

This case was sent to the Attorney on March 23rd, 1896. The owner has been written to on March 25th, May 29th, June 26th and July 2nd, 1896, informing him that the proper plans for light and ventilation must be filed and approved by the Superintendent of Buildings, as required by law, otherwise that the building must be occupied by only two families.

Mr. Becker, however, has failed to comply with the law after a lapse of 5 months. He called at this Department yesterday and stated that he would comply by removing one family. Upon this statement, he was informed that no action would be taken until October 1st.

19.

of the case against the

the premises, 115 East 24

-----

was filed in

permission to alter the said

for two families.

is at present occupied by



COPY

In Board of Examiners May 26th, 1896.

Two Buildings W. S. Brook Avenue 50 ft. North 146th St.  
Petition to allow the front 25 ft. in depth of side walls to  
be built 12 inches on first floor was APPROVED, subject to  
the approval of the construction by the Supt. of Buildings.

Wm. H. Class,

Clerk to Board.

N Y August 19<sup>th</sup> /96  
Hon Wm L Strong  
Mayor City of New York.

Sir

I hereby charge  
Stevenson Constable Supt of  
Buildings with respect of duty  
To wit That in the erection  
of Two Buildings <sup>on</sup> West side of  
Brook Ave 30 ft <sup>h</sup> of 146<sup>th</sup> St  
Said Buildings being 5 Story  
Buildings exceeding the limit  
of 30 ft in height the walls of  
Said Buildings on 1<sup>st</sup> Story are  
only 12" thick instead of 16" as  
provided by law in violation of  
Section 12 Chapter 273 Laws of 1892



from the fact that the Owner  
of Said Buildings is a brother  
of the 1<sup>st</sup> Dep Supt of Buildings  
there is a strong suspicion that  
Mr. Constable is aware of these  
facts if not he ought to be

Respectfully

John J. McCrindle  
634 & 145<sup>th</sup> St

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

A.E.H.

*New York,* Aug. 22nd, 1896.

Hon. William L. Strong,  
Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

In answer to complaint made by J. J. Mc Ardle, 634 E. 145 St., a discharged inspector of this Department, stating that there has been neglect of duty in the erection of two buildings on the West side of Brook Avenue 50' North of 146th Street, I would respectfully state that examination into said matter proves there has been nothing illegal done in said building, same having been approved by the Board of Examiners of this Department.

I enclose copy of Board approval, also original letter from Mr. Mc Ardle.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't. of B'ldgs.

(2 enclosures)



28

Aug. 23rd 1908

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,

S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE  
SUPERINTENDENT

BW

New York,

Aug. 25, 1896.

M.

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 24th inst, requesting report on premises #290 Eighth Ave., for which application for license to give vocal and instrumental concerts to sell wine, beer, etc. has been made.

In reply, I would state that the matter will be given immediate attention.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't of B'ldgs.



# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

BW

*New York,* August 29th, 1896.

*M.*

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 28th inst, requesting report on premises known as Ebling's Casino, situated at St. Ann's Avenue and 156th Street, application having been made for a license to give Vocal and Instrumental Concerts.

In answer I beg to state examination of said premises will be made at once.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't of B'ldgs.

21



# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

H.J.H.

*New York,* Sept. 3, 1896.

*M.*

Hon. William L. Strong,  
Mayor, City Hall.

Dear Sir:-

In relation to Academy of Music, the orders of this Department have been complied with and at this date there are no existing violations, consequently their license may be granted.

Yours truly,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't. of B'ldgs.

32

OTREBUJES

ST. JOHN'S

ST. JOHN'S

1998 .5 1998



# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

BW

*New York,* Sept. 4th, 1896.

*M.*

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 3rd instant, requesting report on premises #2157-2159 Amsterdam Avenue, application having been made by John Flieg, Jr. for license to give vocal and instrumental concerts and to sell wines and beers on said premises.

The matter will be given immediate attention and report sent you as soon as possible.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't of B'ldgs.

33

OF BUILDINGS

NEW YORK

R 18TH ST

Sept. 4th, 1898

OF NEW YORK



# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

BW

*New York,* Sept. 5th, 1896.

Hon. William L. Strong,  
Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 4th inst, enclosing complaint of "A Citizen", concerning building on Grand Street, between Essex & Ludlow Streets, in which it is stated that a Jewish synagogue will be established for the "Jewish New Year and Atonement Days".

Always at this season of the year, I try to get track and location of all these buildings, as there is usually much carelessness in the selection of such buildings for said purposes, and I put every available man I can to examining same, but of course, with my limited force, it is hardly possible to get them all.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable.*  
Sup't of B'ldgs.

34

ORIGINALS

RECEIVED

SEP 10 1934

Sept. 10, 1934

M.



# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NO 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

H.J.H.

*New York,* Sept. 10, 1896.

*J. M.*

Hon. Wm. L. Strong,

Mayor, City Hall.

Dear Sir:-

In relation to Daly's Theatre, the orders of this Department are very nearly completed, therefore, their license may be granted.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Superintendent of Buildings.

35

RECORDS

RECORDS

ST.

Sept. 10, 1896.

J. M.



*H. Lamb*  
*Spokane Bldg*  
*Warren & Co*

**DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,**

**NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,**  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,



B.deY.

*New York,* Sept. 11th, 1896.

*M.*

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of a petition addressed to you requesting my removal from the position of Superintendent of Buildings, on account of certain general charges therein set forth, to which is appended what purports to be the names of fifty-three petitioners with their respective addresses.

All the charges therein contained I, absolutely, deny. To do more is unnecessary, in view of the following facts respecting the petitioners.

Six of them have voluntarily written to me stating that they desire to withdraw their names from the petition, most of them adding that they had been induced to sign it through misrepresentation.

Those remaining divide themselves naturally into three classes: Those who did not sign the petition, but whose names were forged thereon, those who have had no connection whatever with the Department of Buildings, and those who have.

Twenty-five of the petitioners have had nothing whatever to do with the Department since I have had the honor of being the Superintendent of Buildings; and of these twenty-five, seven neither have an office nor reside at the respective addresses given on the petition.

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NO 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

2. To Hon. W. L. Strong *New York,*

It is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that at least they are not very responsible parties, if indeed they are not the names of fictitious persons.

Another of these twenty-five voluntarily called upon me to state that he was requested to circulate the petition for signatures, and was promised the sum of ten cents for every name he could procure to it.

Two more have admitted that they signed the petition merely to please the solicitor or to get rid of him.

Only fifteen of the petitioners have had any transactions with the Department, and these transactions have amounted to very little, the value of the work for which they have filed plans being but one-seventieth of the total value of work for which plans have been filed in this Department while I have been Superintendent of Buildings.

Moreover, six of these fifteen either filed plans for the construction of tenement houses in an illegal manner, or attempted to build tenements or other buildings illegally, or committed some other grave violation of the Building Laws.

One was stopped in an attempt to build in a very dangerous and unsafe manner.

One committed a very grave violation of law in commencing the erection of a building before submitting plans therefor, and after re-



# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,



3. To Hon. W. L. Strong

*New York,*

peated warnings - having neither filed plans nor ceased work - the penalty provided by law for such a violation was imposed upon him. Two other petitioners are his day laborers, who were ordered to cease work in consequence of the violation of law committed by him.

Another peititioner is a man who was a most earnest advocate of the infamous bill to amend the Tenement House Law, which was defeated in the Legislature last year mainly through the efforts of this Department.

The remaining seven names were forged, and hereto is appended a copy of a fairly representative letter received by me in regard thereto.

I have the honor to remain,

Yours very respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Superintendent of Buildings.

and  
- the hand-

Kilwood  
to Chas.

37

Handwritten signature

DO NOT D. P. 10000

2 M. COMMERCE 10000

25 500 10000 10000

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

BW

*New York,* Sept. 11th, 1896.

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 10th inst, requesting report on premises #126-30 E. 14th St., application having been made by Geo. J. Kraus for license to give vocal and instrumental concerts on said premises.

The matter will be given immediate attention and report sent you as soon as possible.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't of B'ldgs.

36

your son as soon as possible. He

the matter will be <sup>S.W. Co.</sup> fixed

about the arrangements concerning

the subscription which has been made

and the fact that the subscription

I have the honor to

very truly



COPY

A.E.H.

Sept.14th, 1896.

Messrs. Siegel-Cooper Co.,

18th Street and 6th Avenue, City.

Gentlemen:-

I beg to inform you that an inspection of the Siegel-Cooper building discloses the fact that as yet certain staircases shown on the plans filed in this Department have not been constructed; that a number of partitions are erected in said building which are not shown on said plans, and that certain of the exits in said building have not been opened as provided by said plans, but are obstructed by show cases and other fixtures. The existence of these partitions and obstructions which block up free access to a number of exits and stairways and the fact that the building has been opened before the staircases provided for in the plans have been constructed, render the use and occupancy of the building in the present state of its construction extremely dangerous to life and limb, and especially so in view of the great crowds of people permitted to enter said building.

Under such circumstances, I have to request that said staircases be provided with the utmost possible speed, and that the partitions and other obstructions to the exits be removed at once so that entirely free access may be given to the various exits, elevators and stairways.

Very respectfully yours,

(Signed) STEVENSON CONSTABLE,

Sup't of B'ldgs.

38

Sept. 14th, 1906.

City.



# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NO 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,



BW

*New York,*

Sept. 15, 1896.

*M.*

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

Enclosed please find copy of letter forwarded to the Siegel-Cooper Co. so as to prevent danger or accident in this building, which is as yet not thoroughly completed nor have all the laws been complied with.

I send said copy to you so you can understand the position I take in regard to said building.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't of B'ldgs.

(Enc.)

N.Y. Sept. 15/96

Hon. William T. Strong

My dear frs:

I have much  
pleasure in introducing  
to you my young friend  
Mr. H. B. Swidlow 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Anything you may be  
able to do for him, in the  
line of his inquiries, will be  
highly appreciated.

Yours very truly  
Franklin Dixon



#220 Fourth Ave., New York,

September 16th, 1896.

Hon. William L. Strong,  
Mayor, City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

Enclosed please find letter of introduction from ex-mayor  
Edson to you, introducing Mr. Laidlaw, second.

As this letter was under same cover with your letter of in-  
troduction to me, I return it.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Crastable*  
Sup't. of Buildings.

39

#220 Fourth Ave., New York,  
September 16th, 1896.

Letter of introduction from ex-mayor

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NO 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE  
SUPERINTENDENT.

H.J.H.

*New York*, Sept. 17, 1896.

Hon. Wm. L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

In answer to application of Otto Ernstein for license for vocal and instrumental concerts, wine and beer, 302 Bowery, I would report upon same as follows:

As upper floors are used as lodging house and as nothing has been done as yet, in the way of repairs or alterations to prepare the place for a concert hall etc., and until said alterations are decided upon and I have plan of same, I would be unwilling to have you grant license for same.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Superintendent of Buildings.



40

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

LIBRARY

1011 ST.

Sept. 17, 1936.

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NR 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

H.J.H.

*New York,* Sept. 18, 1896.

11.

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 17th inst, requesting report on premises Nos. 728-30 Broadway, known as the Broadway Athletic Club, for which application for license to give vocal and instrumental concerts, to sell ales, wines and beers, etc. has been made.

In reply I would state that the matter will be given immediate attention.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't. of B'ldgs.

4-1

knowledge receipt of your company  
report on premises No. 425-20  
the Club, for which application  
mental concerts, to sell also, wines  
the matter will be given immediate

respectfully,



# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NO 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,



B.deY.

*New York,* Sept. 19th, 1896.

Hon. William L. Strong,  
Mayor, of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

In answer to yours of Sept. 18th, with enclosure from Richard Everett and Frederick Buse, and concerning blacksmith's shop on West 63rd Street, I would say that slip application for the erection of said work was filed in this Department on the 14th inst. Notification was given parties, saying as erected was illegal, and the attorneys were directed to proceed in the matter, which I find is being done.

Enclosed please find answer written to Mr. Buse.

I have the honor to remain,

Very respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Superintendent of Buildings.

Dic. S.C.

B.deV.

Sept. 19th,

6

Mr. Frederick Buse,

1106 First Avenue, City.

Dear Sir:-

In answer to yours of Sept. 17th, addressed to the Hon. William L. Strong, and forwarded to this Department for investigation and action, I would respectfully say that I have personally sent for the papers in this matter and have examined same, and find that prior to the 14th inst. frame structure was in course of erection on West 63rd Street, and that papers for the same were filed in this office on Sept. 14th, and that legal notice was served on parties interested therein, and legal proceedings against same taken.

The law prescribes certain form of action to be taken by this Department with ten days notice, etc, which we cannot deviate from; but you may count on whatever authority the law places in this Department will be carried out.

Yours respectfully,

Superintendent of Buildings.

Dic. S.C.



42.



**DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,**

**NO 220 FOURTH AVENUE,**  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,

STEVENSON CONSTABLE,  
SUPERINTENDENT.

H.J.H.

*New York,* Sept. 24th, 1896.

*M.*

Hon. William L. Strong,  
Mayor, City Hall.

Dear Sir:-

In relation to Academy of Music, the orders of this Department have been complied with and at this date there are no existing violations, consequently their license may be granted.

Yours truly,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Superintendent of Buildings.

— Duplicate —

— Original sent Sept 30 96.

Sept.

H.T.H.

Sept. 1942

2 M. CORNER 1915 ST.

25 350 EIGHTH W. DALLAS

APR 12 1942

43



# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NO 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,



BW

*New York,* Sept. 28th, 1898

*M.*

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

I regret to have to report the collapse of the rear portion of the building, #1078 Madison Ave., in course of erection. I am having most careful examination made into the cause of the same and will report immediately upon the completion of said examination.

I have the honor to remain,

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't of B'ldgs.

(Dict.S.C.)



44

O. BRIDGES

NEW YORK  
ER 1875

Sept. 1881

Charles E. Le Barbier, Esq.,  
280 Broadway, N. Y. City.

Dear Sir:-

Having been retained by A. Andrea, the contractor who built the stone wall of the building No. 1078 Madison Avenue, to investigate and report to you my opinion as to the cause that led to the fall of said building on Saturday September 26th 1896, I herewith respectfully submit the following report:-

My first visit to the premises was on Monday September 28th 1896, at which time portion of the stone and brick walls was still standing, although the entire rear wall and that portion of the north wall west of the light shaft, and also portions of the south wall excepting the foundations, and the south light shaft walls, had fallen, or been taken down, and the debris had not been removed at the time of my first inspection.

The following facts, during my first inspection, led me to believe that the insecurity or inability of ground was the primary or initial cause of the collapse.

FIRST:- That the building was built on what is termed "Sunken Lot".

SECOND:- The position that the beams and timbers had taken in their falling, those in the south light shaft wall fell towards the north, and those in the rear of the light shaft fell south.

THIRD:- The general surroundings together with the character of the entire work:-



FOURTH:- the relative thickness of the walls and the comparatively low ceilings of the building, viz: the cellar walls were two feet in thickness, of stone; and only nine feet six inches above the level of cellar bottom. Above this was a sixteen inch brick wall about ten feet six inches in height; and above this there was a twelve inch brick wall about twenty one feet in height. The North wall being a bearing wall, was carried up to receive the fourth tier of beams about ten feet in height above the third story beams, and left without braces.

FIFTH:- The South wall, which was also a bearing wall, was only carried up about four feet above the top of the third story beams, and the rear or west wall was carried up, as I am informed by the contractor, about sill high above the third story beams; and the bricklayers were at work upon the south and rear walls at the time the building collapsed.

SIXTH:- That the north light shaft wall having been built at an angle tended to re-inforce the north wall and being only a few feet from where it was claimed, at that time, that the stone wall buckled, it was my impression that the stone wall could not have buckled as it was tight against the stable wall adjoining, and certainly there would have been an open space between the two walls which would naturally contain some of the materials of the brick walls above it, and the first course of brick which had been laid upon the stone wall from the light shaft to the northwest corner of the building presented a waving appearance which clearly indicated settlement; but it was my impression that the south wall west of the light shaft and the southwest portions of the rear walls settled first; and all of which first contributed to the collapse, as the manner in which the beams fell clearly indicated. ALL of which I pointed out to you at the time.



However, it was impossible to arrive at a definite and conclusive opinion owing to the confusion and mass of ruins at the time.

I visited the premises since the disaster almost daily, and witnessed the removal of the remaining walls, also the so called concrete base.

The general character of the work throughout had been performed without any regard to the provisions of the Building Laws, or the rules of Good Construction, although not sufficiently so as regarded the walls to cause the accident from the weight then imposed upon them, provided that a good solid bottom had been obtained with proper base course.

The stone wall, while not first class, was however, entirely sufficient to safely support the weight already upon it and in no way conduced to the primary cause of the collapse. The so called concrete base upon which this stone wall rested was entirely defective and useless, no portion showed any ability to sustain the weight that was upon it. After the stone wall had been taken down I discovered that this base course was out of level in various parts of its length and breadth.

From the northwest corner of the building to the southwest corner, being the rear wall, or a distance of nineteen feet, showed it to be eleven inches out of level. From the Northwest corner along the north wall thirteen feet distant easterly, showed that portion of the so called concrete base to be five inches out of level, and had sunk in various parts from three to five inches in three feet.



in its width, and was only prevented from going northerly by the resistance of the contiguous stable wall, which had been built below the so called concrete base.

This concrete was not that quality as called for by section 479 of the Building Laws, which provides as follows:-

"Concrete for Foundations shall be made of one part of cement; two parts of sand and five parts of small broken stones, all carefully mixed"

Instead of having small broken stones, cement and sand in proper proportions and carefully mixed in order to unite them in one solid and compact mass, it exhibited stones of various sizes and some which are commonly called "Nigger Heads" scattered promiscuously throughout, and the interspaces filled in with small broken stones, a thin coat of grout poured over it, composed of some "Rosendale Cement" and a large portion of loam until its top face was smoothed off or veneered as it were, so as to present the appearance of a solid mass of concrete. When portions of this so called concrete base were being removed these stones were visible and the cement crumbled and fell off from them by its own weight leaving them absolutely clean, thus showing that there was no adhesion of the component parts of this so called concrete base, which presented a honey-combed appearance.

The ground under this base was soft, and particularly so under the south and southwest corner of rear wall, and showed every indication of having been filled in, and I was able, easily, without force to sink a crow bar four feet into the ground below which this so called concrete base



started.

The general surroundings clearly show that this building was built upon what is known as a "Sunken Lot", which had been filled in with rubbish from time to time. In support of this I have learned from those who have built in this particular locality that it was found necessary to start the foundations of their buildings from twenty to thirty feet below the curb level in order to get good solid bottom, and the stable wall adjoining is below this so called concrete base.

In digging down below the so called concrete bottom I found pieces of brick, broken china, niggerheads and rubbish; most certainly this cannot be called solid bottom as provided for by our Building Laws, and was not capable of sustaining the weight of this incomplete building.

Section 474 of the Building Laws says:- "Shall have Foundations laid on solid ground", and section 483 also provides, "That good solid natural earth shall be deemed to safely sustain a load of four tons to superficial foot"

A. D'ANDREA DID NOT EXCAVATE FOR THE TRENCHES, LAY, OR HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE SO CALLED CONCRETE BASE.

The excavation and said concrete base course was put down, and the cellar graded to the top of the base course by other parties. D'Andreas' contract was only to build the stone wall upon it.

It is my opinion that the stone walls did not buckle as it was claimed. The stone walls were two feet in thickness and only nine feet six inches in height above the



cellar bottom and were four feet below the grade of the cellar, and the only weight upon the north wall was a sixteen inch brick wall, ten feet six inches in height, and only two stories (or about twenty-one feet) of a twelve inch brick wall upon the sixteen inch wall, and it having been built up directly against the stable wall, therefore, there would be no pressure against it and would be only subjected to the super-weight, which would be only about two tons per lineal foot. And the south and rear walls not having been built up as high as the north wall only sustained about one and one half tons (1'1/2) per lineal foot, which the said stone walls were fully capable of safely sustaining had they been started upon a good concrete base placed upon solid ground as provided by sections 474 and 483 of the Building Laws.

The concrete base upon which the stone walls rested was entirely defective and utterly useless to safely sustain either the proposed weight to be placed upon it, or even the weight which had been put upon it at the time of the collapse. This fact is proved by the appearance and condition of the concrete base after the removal of the stone wall, and at the time the wall itself was being removed; also by the nature of the ground. Therefore, it is very evident to any practical builder that the stone wall could not buckle.

And, as a further proof of this assertion, I may add that if the north wall buckled where it was claimed it did, it would have certainly thrown the entire south light shaft wall by its pressure, as the floor beams were built into both north and south walls; I find portions of the south light shaft wall remaining in position although



this wall was the weakest one of the building, and directly opposite to that portion of the north stone wall which is claimed to have buckled. Therefore, my opinion is that the so called concrete base was entirely insufficient and useless to withstand the super-load, and that the accident could not have been averted even if the so called concrete base had been placed upon a solid bottom; but, as it is very evident that the bottom (was not "solid natural earth") and was incapable of safely sustaining the load then upon it. The accident would likewise have occurred even if the so called concrete base had been properly prepared and properly put down.

These facts can be truthfully demonstrated by any practical architect, builder or mechanic that would inspect the premises in their present condition, and clearly show that other parties are, and should be held criminally, responsible for this disaster and not your poor client, D'Andrea, who only contracted to build the stone walls.

In further substantiation of my opinion, I annex a copy of the testimony marked "A", taken before the coroner given by the building inspector, Walsh, also by the bricklayers who were working on the south and rear walls of the building when this sad accident occurred.



"A"

Thomas C. Walsh, Inspector; testified- "On the 26th day of August 1896, I made a report to the Department about the poor and unsuitable quality of the ground; that the ground was worse at the rear, north and south side".

- - - - -

James Nolan, 797 Madison Street, who was at work on the South wall testified: "It seemed to me that I heard something cracking, and the wall seemed to sink right down just as if it went right into the mud. The wall went down just as if it was being pressed down, as if the foundation was going down and the wall on top of it, as though the earth had opened underneath; the south wall was the first wall that fell. The North wall was built up against a wall of Brokaw's Stable, and at first, as it sank, the bricks did not fall off, but the wall went bodily and straight down".

- - - - -

William P. Franklin, 517 West 48th Street testified: "Was working on the South side of the building at 4.30 o'clock when it fell. All of a sudden the beams was slipping from under my feet; I did not know anything until I was taken out. Crane, who was killed, was working right next to me and I was next to the light shaft, and I do not know how or where I fell. I saw Crane carried out in a net. Crane was not three feet from me when I felt the whole thing sinking down".



Edward Gaffney, 947 Columbus Avenue testified: "I was carrying up the southwest corner of the wall, and I did not know anything only that I went down. I did not remember anything until I crawled out at the rear.

- - - - -

It is very evident from the testimony taken before the coroner that no attention had been paid by the officials of the building department to this warning of Inspector Welsh on the 26th day of August. Inspector Welsh had in the meantime been relieved from duty in that district and on the 26th day of September, exactly one month after the report of inspector Welsh, the building collapsed.

The concrete base, the stone walls and a portion of the brick walls had in the meantime been permitted by the Department of Buildings to be built upon this "poor and unsuitable quality of ground".

Therefore the above testimony substantially corroborates my opinion as to the insecurity and nature of the ground, which together with the defective concrete base was the primary and initial cause of the sad accident.

Respectfully submitted.

*James D. Macgregor*



4.

R E P O R T  
on  
FALL OF BUILDING AT No. 1078  
MADISON AVENUE

by

JAMES A. MACGERGOR  
ARCHITECT

19 Liberty Street, New York

# DEPARTMENT OF BUILDINGS,

NO 220 FOURTH AVENUE,  
S.W. CORNER 18TH ST.,



BW

*New York,* Sept. 30, 1896.

*M.*

Hon. William L. Strong,

Mayor of the City of New York.

Dear Sir:-

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 29th inst, requesting report on premises known as Union Park Athletic Club, located at 133rd St. and Willis Ave., for which application for license to give vocal and instrumental concerts, has been made.

In reply I would state that the matter will be given immediate attention.

Yours respectfully,

*Stevenson Constable*  
Sup't of B'ldgs.



45

OLIVER BUNNINGS

1871-1872

1871-1872

Sept. 30, 1896

11

York.