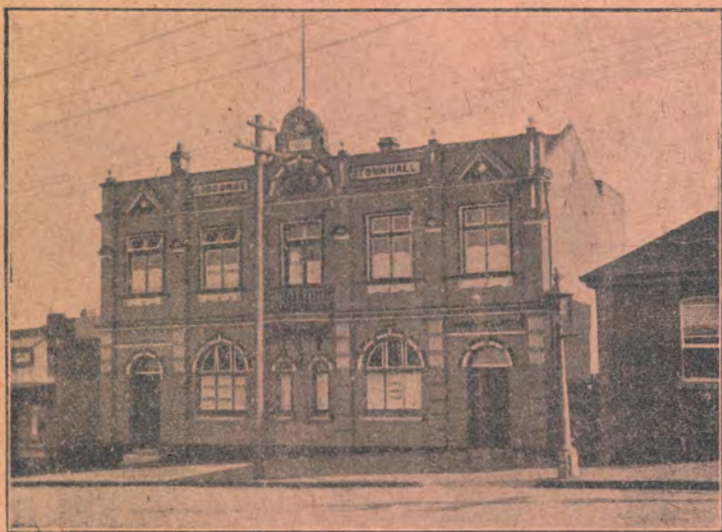
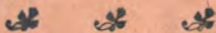


Municipality of Lidcombe



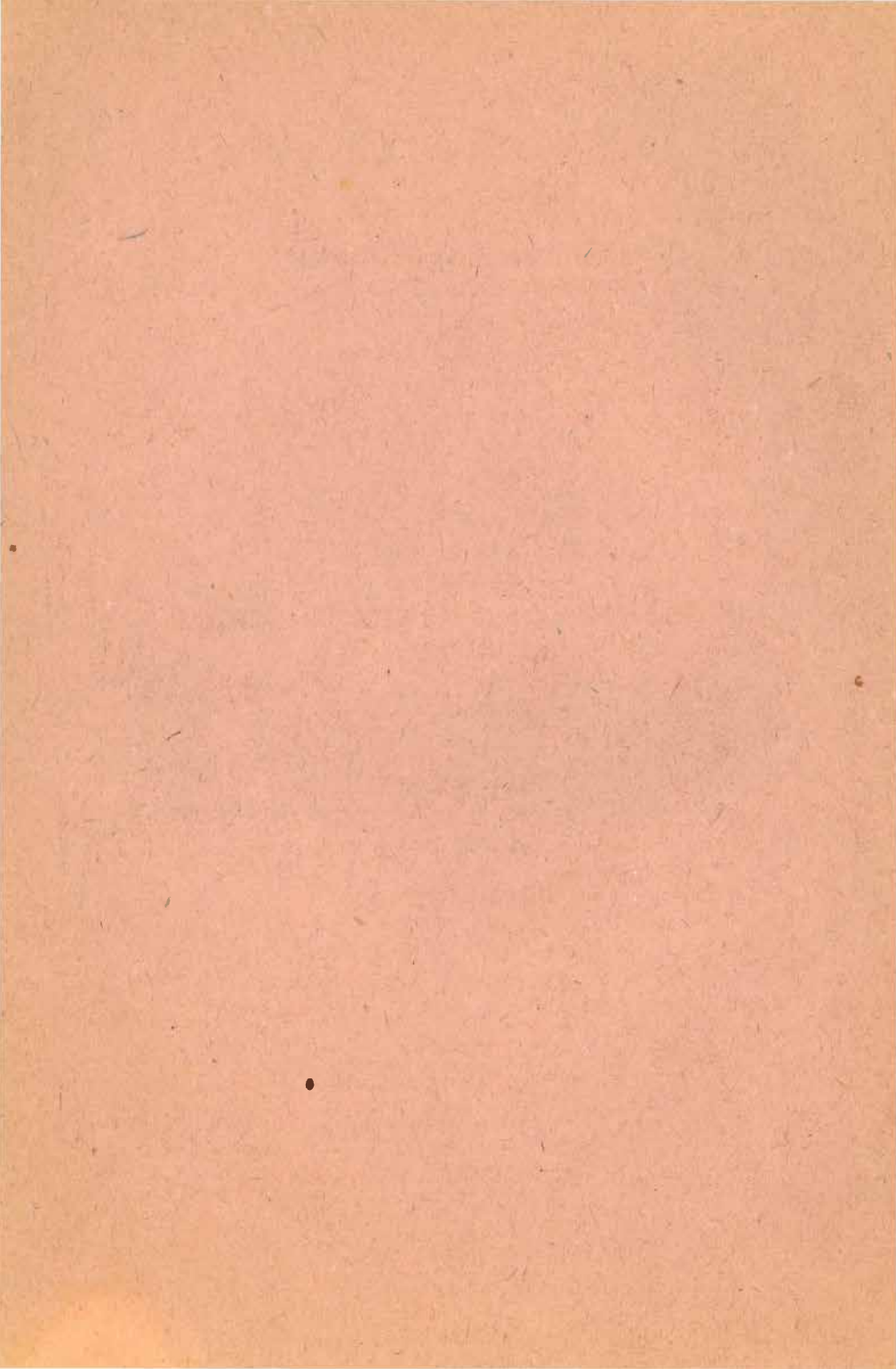
TOWN HALL.



Triennial Report

1920 - 1922

The Cumberland Argus' Ltd., Parramatta.



Municipality of Lidcombe.

LIST OF ALDERMEN

FOR TRIENNIAL PERIOD, 1920, 1921, 1922.

Alderman F. WILSON (Mayor, 1922).
Alderman H. BROWN. (Elected 26th March, 1921).
Alderman W. BROWN.
Alderman T. BURKE.
Alderman F. J. BYERS. (Resigned 9th March, 1921).
Alderman F. JAMES, J.P.
Alderman H. J. LARCOMBE, J.P.
Alderman W. J. MAUNDER, J.P.
Alderman L. C. WHITING, J.P.
Alderman E. N. WYATT.

OCCUPANTS OF MAYORAL CHAIR

DURING THE TRIENNIAL PERIOD.

Ald. W. J. MAUNDER, J.P., 1920. Ald. W. BROWN, 1921.
Ald. F. WILSON, 1922.

THE STAFF.

Town Clerk: S. C. WAYLAND, J.P.

Assistant Clerk: A. A. PORTER.

Overseer of Works: J. GRANT.

Health Inspector: J. BELL.

Costing Clerk: W. SULLENS.

Typiste: Miss E. LODGE.

Caretaker and Impounding Officer: W. R. MAUNDER.

Caretaker of Swimming Baths: G. HAWKINS.

General Information.

AREA OF MUNICIPALITY 8.2.5 sq. miles
POPULATION 12,517 (estimated)
LENGTH OF ROADS 49 miles 12 chains
VALUATIONS—
Improved Capital Value £1,990,297
Unimproved Capital Value £437,674
Assessed Annual Value £120,041

Triennial Report of the Council

OF THE

Municipality of Lidcombe.

1920-1922.

MAYOR'S MINUTE TO COUNCIL.

15th NOVEMBER, 1922.

Gentlemen,—

At last meeting of the Council I intimated that I intended preparing an Annual Report for the year ending Dec., 1922; but, on reflection, I remembered when my predecessor in office suggested a different method of preparing a Mayoral Annual Report, Council, if not by resolution by tacit consent, was against the submission of an Annual Report by the Mayor. However, I still adhere to my promise to present a Report, and, as this is the end of the triennial period, will endeavor to make it a brief resume of the operations of the whole Council during that period.

Of the present Council eight were elected at the last Triennial Election—the ninth, Ald. H. Brown, being elected on 26th March, 1921, in place of Ald. Byers, resigned. This Council, representing as it does a majority of the previous Council, and being ably assisted by the new members, was enabled to continue the principles in regard to our public works that had previously been laid down, viz., that all permanent construction of roads, footpaths and kerbing and guttering should start from the centre of the town and work outwards. The advantages of this scheme are now apparent, as we have now roads, footpaths and kerbing and guttering stretching from the centre of the town to practically the boundary, or to some defined point beyond which further continuance is not at present desirable. There is, of course, much of this class of work still to be done, and I hope during the next triennial period to see further extensions on the principles above enumerated, together with a linking up of the roads recently constructed, in order to complete the scheme.

At the outset I hoped to put forward a resume of the financial position of the Council, but owing to the fact that our term expires on the 2nd December, and the financial year does not end until 31st December, 1922, any figures given would be incomplete and misleading, and the ordinary statistics, which I would like to attach to a Report of this nature, will not be available. I will content myself, therefore, with general observations covering the period under review.

PUBLIC WORKS.

Early in the life of this Council it was recognised that there was a great number of roads requiring immediate attention, and that it would be impossible to construct same out of the ordinary revenue. Council therefore decided to raise a Loan of £25,000 for the construction of roads, bridges and culverts. We were fortunate in securing this Loan under very favorable conditions. The sum of £25,000 was advanced by the Bank at the rate of 5 per cent., to be repaid in thirty equal half-yearly instalments of £1194/8/10, covering principal and interest. When it is realised that the ruling rate of interest at that time was from 7 per cent. to 8 per cent., it will be seen how fortunate we were to secure such excellent conditions.

As it was recognised that the time occupied in spending this money would be for a period of, approximately, two years, we were able to obtain a further concession by being allowed to draw the money in instalments, and receive a rebate of interest on the undrawn balances.



JOSEPH STREET, LEADING TO RAILWAY STATION.

This has resulted in a direct saving to the ratepayers on the first three debentures of £1204/13/3, their nominal value being £3583/6/6; and, owing to the rebates of interest, Council only had to pay £2378/13/3, representing £1751/7/10 principal and £627/5/5 interest. The fourth debenture falls due on the 1st prox., and a further £70 rebate will be allowed on this also.

The scheme provided for 8 miles of roads, three culverts and two bridges. The whole of this work is now nearly complete. As a matter of fact, 7 miles of roads have been completed, and the balance are in course of construction, and should be completed within the next few weeks. Two of the culverts—one at the intersection of Mill and Swete Streets, and the other at the intersection of Cambridge and Vaughan Streets—are complete, and the preparatory work in connection with the Notting Hill Road bridge is now in hand. Work on the Kerr's Road bridge has been temporarily held up, as it is anticipated that the con-

struction of a subway at this point by the Railway Commissioners under the Regent's Park line might interfere with the bridge when constructed.

In addition to the works carried out under the Loan proposal, out of the ordinary revenue during the same period we also constructed 52 chains of roads, 189 chains of kerbing and guttering (making a total in the whole Municipality of 12½ miles), and 16,096 sq. yards of asphalt footpaths. Further, out of revenue we practically renewed Water Street, Vaughan Street and Railway Parade bridges, and provision is made for the balance of the bridges to be done under the Loan proposal.

In order to preserve the roads that have been constructed, Council has given the question of maintenance a lot of consideration, and, as an experiment, has tarred the surface of Notting Hill Road, Joseph Street and Church Street. The result of this tarring has been that these roads have been kept intact and has proved such a boon it is to be hoped that in the near future the balance of the roads recently constructed in the Municipality will be similarly treated, thereby adding to the life of the road and reducing maintenance to a minimum of cost.

In order to carry out this work, we have just purchased a horse-drawn street-sweeper to do the preparatory work. This labor-saving device should enable the work of tarring road surfaces to be carried out at a greatly reduced cost. I might add, it is the intention of Council to employ this broom in sweeping the main portion of the business area, if practicable, in accordance with their promise made to the business men recently, when they petitioned Council for steps to be taken to deal with the dust nuisance.

A scheme which has engaged my earnest attention is the co-operation of the citizens in lending their practical assistance to Council in the upkeep of the footpaths of the Municipality. A large amount of revenue is yearly expended in chipping the grass on unasphalted footpaths, which, in my opinion, could be undertaken by the owners of property on a co-operative basis, thus relieving the Council of expenditure which is of no permanent value. I am pleased to say that quite a number of residents have adopted this scheme, and are keeping the footpaths in front of their property in a first-class condition, as well as enhancing the value and beautifying the respective localities. If more of this spirit were shown, it would enable the Council to devote its energies to the more permanent works, such as strips of asphalt and kerbing and guttering, and thus the ratepayers would be helping themselves as well as their representatives in the Council; for, when all is said and done, it is for the common good of everyone who owns property in the Municipality.

During the period under review the Soldiers' Settlement at Marne Park has sprung into existence, nearly 100 houses having been erected there. This area has received consideration from Council in the following matters:—Electric lighting (both street and house services), a pedestrian bridge over the creek giving access to the town, and endeavors made to have trains stopped at Rookwood Station for the convenience of the residents in that area. The drainage question at Marne Park is one of great importance, and should be a theme of activity for the incoming Council.

The question of access to Hyde Park and South Lidecombe, via Brixton Road, has been a very thorny problem for years past, and has been shelved from time to time, but it is gratifying to report that this Council has now definitely decided to grapple with the question. As a result, a strip of land at the corner of London Road was purchased for the purpose of diverting the channel from the street to the disused clay pits, and to commence the reclamation of the streets with a view to

opening them to traffic. When completed, this work will be a distinct benefit to South Lidcombe.

LOAN WORKS.

I have dealt briefly in this Minute with the Loan expenditure; but now, by the direct wish of Council, I include the following report of the Loan Committee (consisting of Ald. W. Brown, E. N. Wyatt and myself, who have supervised the carrying out of the whole of the works done under the Loan scheme) presented to Council on 15th November, 1922:—

The term of the present Council having nearly expired, and the loan work being near completion, we present for the information of the Council this comprehensive report in order that the results of the expenditure of the loan money may be clearly realised.

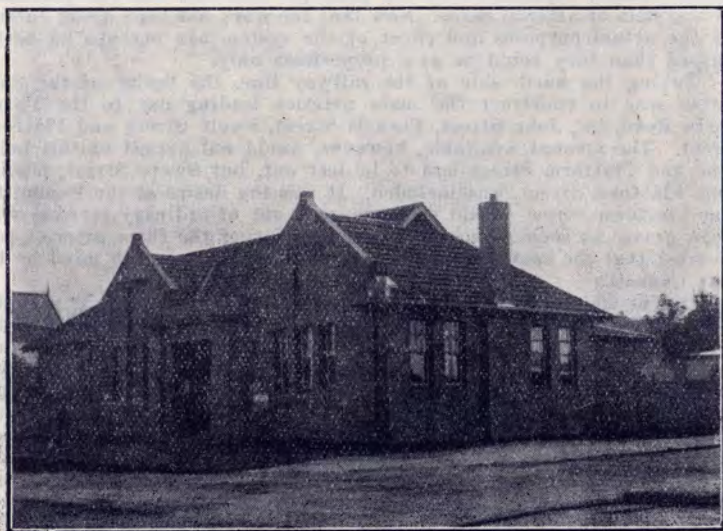
It will be remembered that the original Loan Committee that drafted the proposed expenditure of the money in its report which was adopted by the Council explained that the principle followed was one providing for a system of arterial roads. Now that the work has been about carried out the actual purposes and effect of the system can perhaps be better grasped than they could be as a proposition only.

Taking the north side of the railway line, the desire of the Committee was to construct the main arteries leading out to the Parramatta Road, i.e., John Street, Francis Street, Swete Street and Platform Street. The amount available, however, would not permit of this being done and Platform Street had to be left out, but Swete Street, leading from Platform Street, was included. It was the desire of the Committee that Platform Street should be made good out of ordinary revenue with creek gravel as soon as possible, thus completing the three arteries, and we trust that the completion of the scheme will be borne in mind by the next Council.

On the south side of the line the great bulk of the traffic is provided for by six great arms radiating to about the boundaries of the Municipality. These are: (1) Railway Parade, extending to the Auburn boundary, providing a through road to that town and serving Lidcombe residents en route; (2) Water Street to the Auburn boundary (it being hoped that by arrangement with Auburn Council this road will at some future date be extended); (3) Vaughan Street to Auburn boundary—a most useful and important artery, removing some excessively bad places and providing access to an important part of the town; (4) Kerr's Road, Tilba Street, Graham Street and Clark Street to Auburn Boundary. While the Clark Street end of this section is only thinly populated at the present time, it will permit the development of this area, and as regards the other streets mentioned a large number of people will be served by this route. (5) Kerr's Road, Notting Hill Road, Hyde Park Road and Kingsland Road, almost touching the Bankstown boundary. The work on this route started with Hyde Park Road, Notting Hill Road being already done and Kerr's Road being provided for in No. 4 route. This long arm extending for a considerable distance through thinly populated parts is perhaps better proof than anything else of the fact that the Council discarded narrow, provincial views in laying out the loan money in favor of broad lines of a well thought-out policy, designed as far as possible so that every part of the area would get some benefit from the loan, and it was no doubt observing this principle that caused Mr. Engineer Downey, who enquired on behalf of the Department into the loan proposal, to report that it appeared to be "a well thought-out and well-considered proposal, and one designed to have the greatest amount of work for the money expended"; and (6) Joseph Street, to Lidcombe State Hospital boundary, one of the main streets of the town. It is hoped that some means will be found whereby this road will be continued to the Bankstown boundary, but as the land is at present wholly non-ratable and the road is not much used by our ratepayers,

the Committee did not feel justified in recommending the further extension of this route.

These routes form the principle of the scheme, but there are in addition some connecting links, such as Mary Street, Victoria Street and Woodburn Road. This latter connects No. 3 and No. 4 routes and is really a further extension of No. 4 and removes the trouble that existed in Woodburn Road. Cambridge Street has also been made through from Vaughan Street to Mount Auburn Road to intersect that area. Arthur Street was also made, in conjunction with Strathfield Council, to complete the link through to that Municipality, and is in reality a further extension of Church Street, which was made out of revenue before the loan was obtained, and therefore forms another artery. It will therefore be seen that through the loan expenditure the district is served by nine arterial roads, to be increased to ten when Platform Street is put into order.



POST AND TELEGRAPH OFFICE.

Work did not start in earnest on the roads until 1st April, 1921, and seeing that the proposal provided for the spreading of the expenditure over two years it will be seen that in regard to time we are well within the mark.

In regard to cost, it will be fresh in the minds of the Aldermen that a recent report and estimate showed that an additional £2500 would be required to finish the work. In supplementing the figures then given we would point out that a surplus of the original loan that was not allocated was used up in extra work on John Street, Railway Parade and Arthur Street. The excess of expenditure over the estimates may therefore be said to be £2500, or 10 per cent over. In explanation we would point out that the estimates were framed in the early part of 1920 and were based on prices then current and on actual offers then in possession of Council. There was ballast delivered on the roads 8/6 to 10/- according to the locality. Owing, however, to the long delay of about twelve months in getting the loan proposal through, no ballast was obtained for these prices, but for nearly the whole of the supplies 8/11 per ton

on trucks at Lidecombe station had to be paid and an average of about 2/9 per ton for cartage. Just recently a small reduction has taken place, but it came too late to have any effect. Thus it will be seen that an excess of about 2/6 per ton had to be paid on the whole 14,000 tons of ballast used, which in itself accounts for £1750.

The price of metal when the estimates were framed was 10/3 per ton, but rises took place and 11/- and 11/6 has had to be paid for practically the whole of it, certainly a rise of at least 1/- per ton, which on the 12,000 tons used is £600. It will therefore be seen that these two items of material alone account for £2350, while, if the smaller items of material, such as toppings, small metal, tar, etc., were included, material alone would account for the whole of the excess, without taking into consideration any rises in wages, and these have been considerable.

The wages when the estimates were made were:—

| | | | | |
|----------------|----|---|---|-----------|
| Laborers | £4 | 2 | 0 | per week. |
| Gangers | 4 | 6 | 0 | per week. |
| Carters | 6 | 0 | 0 | per week. |

When the work was started, these had risen to:—

| | | | | |
|----------------|----|----|---|-----------|
| Laborers | £4 | 10 | 0 | per week. |
| Gangers | 5 | 0 | 0 | per week. |
| Carters | 6 | 2 | 0 | per week. |

In July, 1921, a further increase took place, as follows:—

| | | | | |
|----------------|----|----|---|-----------|
| Laborers | £4 | 17 | 0 | per week. |
| Gangers | 5 | 7 | 0 | per week. |
| Carters | 6 | 9 | 0 | per week. |

In November, 1921, a reduction of 3/- all round took place. In July, 1922, the 44-hour week at full pay came into force, which meant an increase of about 8/- per week for laborers and more for gangers and carters. In September, 1922, a reduction of 4/- per week all round took place.

To find out the exact amount of excess paid for wages would of course entail an enormous amount of calculation, and indeed would not be possible until the work is completed, but an examination of the above figures and a conservative estimate shows that at least £500 extra will have been paid in wages when the work is completed.

It will therefore be seen that the original estimates were increased by the sum of at least £3000 through increases in labor and material, and as only £2500 is asked to complete the work it follows that the original estimates must have been reliable, and also that the supervision of the work has been efficient.

While not altogether called upon to deal with the financial application and bearing of the loan on the Municipality in a general way, we may be permitted to point out that the loan proposal as advertised and approved provided for the following loan rates:—

| | |
|---------|----------------|
| 1920 .. | ½d in the £ |
| 1921 .. | 1.04d in the £ |
| 1922 .. | 1.43d in the £ |
| 1923 .. | 1.58d in the £ |

whereas the loan rates levied were:—

| | |
|---------|-------------|
| 1920 .. | ½d in the £ |
| 1921 .. | ¾d in the £ |
| 1922 .. | 1d in the £ |

while next year it seems to be certain that the full amount will not be levied.

On payment of the fourth debenture now falling due, a sum of £2364/12/4 will have been paid off the principal.

Summarising the foregoing we think that the Council can justly claim to have kept absolute faith with the ratepayers in all matters in connection with the loan, and we have carefully handled the whole business in the best interest of the Municipality.

We would like to impress upon the incoming Council the imperative necessity of giving close attention to the matter of upkeep of the roads. The ever increasing volume of motor traffic demands a tarred surface to prevent fretting away, and we trust this will be provided for this summer, particularly on those roads that carry the heavier motor traffic.

In conclusion, we wish to acknowledge the fact that throughout the work we have been fortunate in having, on the whole, excellent and honest workmen, giving a fair day's work, without which it would not have been possible to achieve such satisfactory results. The gangers have been most efficient, and the Overseer has given his usual careful attention.

We would also like, before closing, to place on record our high appreciation of the manner in which the cartage contractors—Messrs. F. and J. Brown—have carried out their huge contract, involving the removal of about 30,000 tons of material, besides ploughing, grading, etc. Despite the fact that the Railway Commissioners handled our loading in a shocking manner frequently holding up trucks on the road for several days and then landing as many as 20 trucks at once, never once during the progress of the work did the slightest hitch occur. In fact, the handling of the work by the contractors removed completely from the shoulders of the Loan Committee what might under other circumstances have proved the most vexatious part of the whole job.

PARRAMATTA ROAD.

The vexed question in regard to this Council's contribution towards the cost of the re-construction of Parramatta Road is still unsettled. Council's attitude in this matter was guided almost entirely by the then State Treasurer, Mr. Lang. When the re-construction of Parramatta Road was being put in hand by the late Government, the question of Council's share of the cost was debated with the then Treasurer, Mr. J. T. Lang, who personally attended a meeting of Council. The result of that conference was an agreement made by both parties, and which was most satisfactory to this Council. Negotiations at that time were more or less of a confidential nature, and an agreement satisfactory to this Council would have been completed but for the limited time prior to the Validation Act being passed by the Government and the unfortunate illness of Mr. Lang, who was ill at that time, and unable to be present to see that this agreement was incorporated in the Bill. However, we are now endeavoring to have a deputation to the present Minister on the subject. Mr. Lang took up the cudgel on behalf of this Council in the House during last month, detailing the whole of the negotiation between himself and this Council, pointing out that he attended our meeting at the instigation of the late Premier, Mr. John Storey, and that a compact was actually entered into by his Government and this Council. He then asked the Minister to ratify that agreement, and we still have hopes of a satisfactory settlement of this question being arrived at in the near future.

RATING PROBLEMS.

In addition to the ordinary revenue of the Council, this Council has been of the opinion that the large Government Institutions, if they are not actually ratable, should at least contribute towards the upkeep of

the roads leading to their institutions. The Board of Health have on occasions contributed small amounts of money towards the cost of certain work being done on the roads adjacent to their properties, thus admitting the principle; but we are also of the opinion that the Cemetery Trusts should do likewise.

The Council submitted to the Annual Local Government Conference their opinion that cemeteries should be declared ratable land within the meaning of the Local Government Act. Council's views were ably put before the Conference by Ald. Maunder, and the Conference on that and each succeeding year approved of the principle. We then approached the Minister by deputation, with a view of having the Act amended. It was clear that he was opposed to the principle of the land being declared ratable and on the same conditions as ordinary land, and an alternative scheme was then submitted, viz., that the various cemeteries should contribute an amount of, say, 5 per cent. of their income as a rate. The Minister considered that Council had a just claim for some contribution from the Cemetery Trusts, and promised that he would place on the Estimates for the following year the sum of £1000, in lieu of our proposal, which was to be paid to this Council for the maintenance and upkeep of the roads leading to the Cemetery.

The Minister kept his promise as far as putting £1000 on the Draft Estimates, but we regret to point out that on re-consideration this amount was struck off. However, I hope that further efforts will be made, and our just claims receive recognition.

Under the provisions of the Local Government Act, gas mains are ratable. Whilst Council had gas street lamps, it was part of the contract that any rate levied by the Council on their mains was to be added to the price paid for street lighting. This precluded Council from taking advantage of that section of the Act. However, when the method of street lighting was altered from gas to electricity, a charge was then levied on the gas mains, amounting to, approximately, £120 per annum. The Gas Company appealed against almost all the charges levied on their mains by the Municipal Councils, and it was decided, as there was a principle of law involved, that one Council should be taken as a test case—Council's contribution towards the cost to be in the proportion of the amount of rate to be received, and the others settled according to the judgment in this case. The Councils were successful in the appeal as far as the principle of rating was concerned, but the amount of our assessment will be reduced to, approximately, £70 per annum.

It will be remembered that five years ago the Abattoirs appealed against an assessment made in respect of their main area, and, after Council had successfully defended the appeal, the Minister for Public Health stepped in and called a conference of the parties concerned to prevent further threatened litigation, when it was agreed to accept a rate of £800 per annum in respect of this assessment for a period of five years. This agreement expired last year, and a re-valuation of the area was made for the current year. The Board again appealed against this assessment, and a compromise was effected by which the Board was to pay £1000 per annum, instead of £800, as in previous years. They further desired that Council should enter into a further agreement, making this amount a fixed contribution for a period of five years, as on the previous occasion. However, as it was near the end of the triennial period, and Council not wishing to bind the incoming Council by any steps they would take in the matter, agreed to accept the amount for one year only, leaving it an open question to the incoming Council as to what attitude they should adopt in regard to this assessment.

The Amending Act of 1919 declared that lands vested in the Railway Commissioners were ratable lands within the meaning of the Local Go-

vernment Act. Council therefore levied a rate of £1083/10/10 on the railway lands of the area. This year, however, the Commissioners appealed against the basis of rating, and, as in the case of the Gas Company, a test case was made of one Council, and the Council's contention was again upheld, thus securing to the Council on its present rating basis the sum of, approximately, £1000 per annum. It should be borne in mind that in the Amending Bill recently before the House an attempt was made to have practically all railway lands valued at the nominal sum of £1 per acre. This clause was eventually held over, but Council must be on the look-out for further efforts by the Railway Commissioners to avoid Local Government taxation.

RAILWAY MATTERS.

Council have long recognised that the railway facilities provided at Lidecombe are inadequate to the needs of the district, and have not been idle in this matter, but all our attempts at obtaining improvements to the building itself are met by the stock reply to the effect that in connection with the duplication of the Regent's Park line it is intended to



RAILWAY STATION.

re-build the Lidecombe Station, and beyond that we have been unable to obtain any concession, save perhaps a few extra trains and some minor facilities, such as an indicator-board on the up side platform, a destination-board on the other, and a construction under the overhead bridge to prevent steam, smoke, etc., from the engines coming through the openings in the bridge to the discomfort of people using the same. However, as the line is now nearing completion, we have hopes that the long-promised station will shortly become an established fact. The opening of this line—Lidecombe to Cabramatta, via Regent's Park—will undoubtedly give a great impetus to the development of this area. Even now one sees evidences of this round Regent's Park, where big industrial concerns are opening up. One must also refer to the development of Regent's Park itself. Land is being subdivided in all directions, big prices are being obtained, and building is particularly active—large numbers of residences are now in the course of construction, and also a fair percentage of shops. The improved type of residence being erected is also worthy of note. This development is acknowledged by the Railway Commissioners by the improved railway services on this line, and the installation of a Sunday

afternoon service; and, even as late as last meeting, Council approached the Railway Commissioners with a view to having a Sunday morning service instituted.

Kerr's Road and Vaughan Street Subways.—When the duplication of the Lidcombe-Regent's Park line was commenced, it came as a shock to the Council to find that it was the intention of the Commissioners to close Kerr's Road and Vaughan Street, and erect an overhead bridge midway between the two, in lieu of the present crossings. It took considerable effort on the part of Council to get an admission from the Commissioners that this was the intention; but, as soon as we received the information, Council immediately called a public meeting, circularised the district, and had a deputation to the Railway Commissioners, urging that this proposal be abandoned, and subways provided at each street in lieu thereof. The Commissioners, however, were adamant in their intention to close these roads, and it was only after several deputations by this Council, and the untiring efforts of our Parliamentary representatives, that we at last won the day, and now have the assurance of the Commissioners that these two roads will be left open and subways provided.

Whilst speaking of railway matters, I must refer to the improved means of transport now provided by the three motor bus services to Hyde Park, Clarke Street and Bankstown; and, even at last meeting, another application was approved to run a service from Lidcombe to the Abattoirs gates, via John and Francis Streets. There is now a through service from Parramatta to Sydney, via Parramatta Road. These improved means of conveyance are a great benefit to the residents of the district, and proof of the rapid development of the area.

Council also joined with the neighbouring Municipalities in endeavoring to have a passenger service installed on the Lidcombe-Enfield line, and a deputation was held on the 2nd inst. to the Commissioners urging this proposal. At the present time I am unable to advise as to the result of the deputation.

Your representatives have been energetic in railway matters; and, even if the bigger objects have not yet been achieved, we feel that our constant representations to the authorities must in the end secure for us railway facilities commensurate with the needs of such a rapidly developing town as Lidcombe.

STREET LIGHTING.

At the beginning of the triennial period this Council's street lighting consisted of 114 gas lamps and 59 electric light lamps, for which we were paying at the rate of £3/15/- and £3/2/6 per lamp p.a., respectively. Early in 1920 this Council took the initiative, and approached the City Council with a view of extending the electric street lighting throughout the whole of the Municipality. This, by careful negotiation, we were able to obtain at a time when many other Councils were unable to secure extensions, and even when the policy of the City Council was not altogether favorable to extensions in the suburbs. On 1st January, 1921, we were enabled to do away with the gas lamps and switch on the electric light over the whole area. At the end of 1921 we had 313 street lights, whereas at the end of 1920 there were only 173; and now at the present moment there are as many as 357 street lights in this area, besides some other extensions which are not yet complete. The full value of this change over from gas to electric light can be more fully realised when it is considered that from the day we changed over to the electric lighting system the price for the gas street lighting was raised from £3/15/- per lamp per annum to £9/10/6 per lamp per annum. The present cost of our street lighting is £1235/13/3 per annum, whereas if we had the same number of gas lamps as we have electric lights, to-

day the cost would be over £3400 per annum. The greater efficiency with the lower cost, and the consequent saving to the ratepayer by this Council's foresight in changing the system of street lighting, must be apparent to all.

This year has seen extensions of the electric light over Marne Park and Mandemar Estate, and we hope before the end of the year to see the electric street lighting through North Lidcombe. In addition to the extension of street lighting, the Council has not been idle in other matters connected with electric light. Considerable difficulty has existed in securing the extension of the light for house service purposes, and this Council, by deputation, waited on the Lord Mayor in regard to this matter. We pointed out the handicap and difficulties under which we were laboring, and he promised us that steps would be taken to make the conditions under which house service lighting would be available much easier. In accordance with his promise, officers of the City Council consulted with myself and officers of the Council and inspected the area, and, judging by the notifications of the extensions of mains for house service lighting that are now being received, Council's efforts in this matter are apparently bearing fruit.

SANITARY SERVICE.

During the period under review, owing to the increase in cost of materials, fodder, wages, etc., and the heavy depreciation of plant, Council were reluctantly compelled to increase the price of the sanitary service in 1921. However, by careful management and re-construction of the system of collecting sanitary fees, we have this year been able to reduce the fees by 2d per service, and we are now giving one of the cheapest and most efficient sanitary services in the metropolitan area. Council have not rested content with this alone, but are of the opinion that the time is now ripe for an extension of the sewerage system into Lidcombe. With this object in view, we have, with the neighbouring Municipalities of Auburn and Granville, approached the Minister by a joint deputation, and also by individual efforts, and on one occasion were rewarded by having an amount of £10,000 placed on the Estimates for the preliminary work in connection with the sewerage scheme; and I believe that, had it not been for the change of Government just about that period, something substantial might have been done in this regard. I regret to state, however, that up to the present nothing practical has been done towards giving this district a sewerage system, although as late as last meeting we were advised by the Metropolitan Board of Water Supply and Sewerage that they were prepared to extend the sewerage system to the Mandemar Estate, which is part of the Municipality of Lidcombe, and brings us a step nearer our objective, conditionally on the vendors of the estate guaranteeing the deficiency. Council have not let the matter rest at this, but quite recently joined with our neighbours in presenting a joint petition to Parliament urging the extension of the sewerage system. The result of our efforts in this regard up to the present moment I am not in a position to state.

PARKS.

During the period under review, Council has still pursued an active policy in regard to the parks, and in connection with the Wellington Park action is now being taken which will secure even better results than those already achieved. Whilst referring to the Wellington Park, I must place on record my appreciation of the beautiful monument erected there by the Lidcombe Permanent Memorial and Peace Celebration Committee in honor of our soldiers who enlisted in the Great War. The memorial has now been handed over to the Council as trustees, who will now be responsible for its care and maintenance. It is pleasing to

note that this monument was designed by one of our ratepayers, equally so to find Council have already recorded their appreciation of his efforts in their books of record.

This monument was unveiled on November 13th, 1921, by Sir Granville Ryrie, K.C.M.G., C.B., V.D., and subsequently handed over to Council at one of the most successful social functions ever held in this town. About the same time a war trophy (a German machine-gun, captured by the 17th Battalion, A.I.F., between Warfussee and Brettoneaux and Framevilliers, forward of Villiers Brettoneaux, in France, on 8th August, 1918, shortly after the great offensive had been launched, was presented to this town and vested in the Council as trustees by the Commonwealth Government. This has also been suitably mounted in Wellington Park, and was unveiled by Lieut.-Col. Grey on 6th November, 1921.

The Lidcombe Park has also received attention, trees, etc., having been planted, and it is gratifying to note that the local sporting bodies are now patronising the park, which gives encouragement to Council to go on with further improvements. The two cricket wickets in the park are now used every Saturday, and the Cycle Club have taken advantage of the track. Council have endeavored to assist these bodies by clearing the ground near the wickets, and are now engaged, in co-operation with the Cycle Club, in effecting improvements to the track. Whilst speaking of these sporting bodies, one must refer to the Lidcombe Annual Sports Committee, who so successfully ran a big sports meeting on this park early this year, and who now contemplate running an even larger carnival on 26th January next. This Committee has for its object the improvement of the parks, and Council are whole-heartedly behind the movement, and we hope in the near future to see such improvements carried out in the parks that will be worthy of the parks and of Lidcombe. I must congratulate the citizens who have inaugurated this very desirable means of popularising the park, and am confident that their efforts will meet with the approbation of the ratepayers generally, and the result will be a distinct gain to the Municipality.

BATHS.

During the last three years there has been a revival of interest in swimming at the Lidcombe Swimming Baths. In the latter part of 1920 the Lidcombe Swimming Club was formed, and last year made rapid progress, and this year promises to excel even last year. Council, recognising the value of swimming baths to this area, and the residents thereof, made every endeavour to foster the club. Last year the accommodation at the baths being limited, Council provided the necessary material for the erection of a dressing shed for the members of the Club, which was erected by the members of the Club themselves, without further cost to the Council. One of the conditions imposed by the Council on the Club was that they should give demonstrations of life-saving methods at the baths, and this week I am pleased to say that an actual class of instruction in life-saving has been commenced at the baths, which class will be open to both the public and the members of the Swimming Club, also the baths are now open to the public practically every afternoon and evening during the week, the only exception being Monday, which is cleaning day, and Sunday evenings. In order to meet the requirements of the people in regard to swimming, Council have this year appointed a caretaker of the baths, and the increased revenue obtained has thus far fully justified this course. We have also installed a set of recording turnstiles, and anticipate carrying out even further improvements to the baths.

These baths are a valuable asset to the town, and we hope that the residents of Lidcombe will fully avail themselves of the facilities thus offered. Special hours are set apart for the Public Instruction De-



MUNICIPAL BATHS.

partment, whereby the various schools in the district are enabled to teach swimming to the scholars, and this is taken advantage of by the Lidcombe, Granville, Auburn, and Flemington Schools.

NEW BUILDINGS.

During the period under review the town of Lidcombe has developed surely and on the right lines, there being a steady growth of new buildings during the whole period. The supervision of buildings is now under an officer of the Council, who has had years of practical experience as a builder, which should ensure satisfaction to Council and builders alike. The year's figures are still incomplete, but building is now very active, and this year will exceed either of the previous two years. The actual figures for the period are:—

| | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---------|
| 1920 .. | 79 brick buildings | £53,855 |
| | 26 weatherboard buildings | 11,765 |
| 1921 .. | 51 brick buildings | 27,297 |
| | 26 weatherboard cottages | 11,475 |
| | 11 shops | 4,560 |
| 1922 to last meeting— | | |
| | 44 weatherboard cottages | 18,584 |
| | 56 brick cottages | 35,030 |
| | 24 shops | 10,379 |

I would draw your attention to the increase in the number of shops being built, which is a visible sign of the prosperity of our town.

I have discussed the prospects of Lidcombe with our local bankers, who assure me that from a banker's point of view Lidcombe is financially solid and developing on sound lines.

A glance at the official census shows that the population of Lidcombe has doubled in the last decade, the official figures when the census was taken on 2nd April, 1911, being 5418, and on 4th April, 1921, 10,517. Considering the number of new houses built and occupied since that period we can safely say there has been a further increase since that date of well over 2000 people.

A fresh valuation was made at the beginning of the triennial period, but owing to subdivisions, new buildings, etc., the values are constantly altering. These were brought up to date each year, but during this current year this Municipality was brought under the operations of the Valuation of Land Act, and a re-valuation has just been completed by the Valuer-General. The result of his valuations are not yet to hand, but I anticipate a further large increase in our land values.

It is gratifying to note the improvements effected at our local school, which I might state were long overdue. In fact I doubt if similar conditions existed in any other school in N.S.W. It is also gratifying to note the efforts now being made by the Education Department to meet the school requirements of this district. A temporary Kindergarten School has been opened in the Presbyterian Church, Tilba-street, and we have been advised of extensive resumptions in Harrow Road and Auburn Road for the purpose of erecting another school in that portion of the Municipality.

For many years past the office accommodation for the staff and the facilities for the public transacting business has been most inadequate owing to the lower portion of the building being let to the postal authorities as a post office. Council decided to give the postal people notice to quit the premises with a view to the utilisation of the rooms for its own staff. The result was that a new post office was erected in the centre of the town, alterations and improvements put in hand, and Council have now for the use of the staff commodious and up-to-date offices, and the public will, I am sure, greatly appreciate the better facilities afforded them.

During the year alterations in the personnel of the staff, as well as a re-allotment of duties, have been effected, which will have most beneficial results. Until recently the duties of the Health Inspector, Sanitary Inspector, Caretaker of Baths, Caretaker of the Town Hall and Impounding Officer were carried out by one official. Owing to the rapid and enormous growth of the Municipality this condition of affairs could not longer be carried on with efficiency. Consequently, Council decided to appoint a certificated Health Inspector to carry out that office, combined with the duties of Building Inspector; a Caretaker of the Town Hall, with the additional duty of Impounding Officer; and a Caretaker of the Baths (for the swimming season only). This arrangement is now working admirably and with very small additional cost to the ratepayers.

The requirements of a rapidly developing area such as this are legion, and although we have done much, there still remain many problems for the incoming Council. We claim, however, to have judiciously handled our financial affairs, securing good returns for all moneys spent. We have endeavored to, and I say successfully, anticipate many of our ratepayers' requirements, attended to others as occasion demanded; and I say without hesitation that this triennial period will pass into history as the most progressive of this town's municipal career. This has been ren-

dered possible by the loyal co-operation of all Aldermen on matters that were for the common good, and in having such an excellent staff to carry out Council's instructions.

With a final word of thanks to my brother Aldermen for their loyal support accorded me during my Mayoral regime, I will conclude my report by expressing the wish that each successive year will be marked by progress similar to that during the period I have just dealt with.



The foregoing Mayoral Minute was adopted by Council at its meeting held on 15th November, 1922, and ordered to be printed.

S. C. WAYLAND,
Town Clerk.

F. WILSON,
Mayor.

