



City of Cambridge

In City Council

September 15, 1931.

WHEREAS:-

A communication has been received from His Honor the Mayor announcing of the death of Lieut. William J. Atkinson of Engine 4, Cambridge Fire Department, on August 17, 1931, as a result of his heroic efforts to save the life of another, it is desirable and fitting that the City Council should join with the Mayor and record its tribute of respect to his memory and show public appreciation of the long and splendid service he has rendered to the City of Cambridge.

Lieut. Atkinson was born in Cambridge and resided here his entire life. He was but fifty-five years old - still in the prime of life - yet he had been a member of the Fire Department for thirty-one years. He never lacked enthusiasm in improving his knowledge of fire fighting and in bettering the working conditions of his coworkers.

His life was one of unselfishness as typified by this deed and by his action during the influenza epidemic in 1918 when he stepped forward volunteering his services and working among the sick, who were hospitalized in the old Merrill School, doing everything possible to assist the afflicted.

These deeds bespeak the innermost promptings of a heart filled with love and devotion for his fellow men. He went through life conscientiously giving valuable service to the public.

It is therefore

RESOLVED:-

That the City Council of Cambridge hereby recognizes the



City of Cambridge

In City Council

- 2 -

public loss sustained in the untimely death of Lieut. William J. Atkinson. Recalling his faithfulness to public duty, we place upon the record our tribute to his memory.

" Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay lay down his life for his friend."

SEP 15 1931

*Adopted unanimously by a
rising vote*

Frederick H. Burke

Executive Department SEP 17 1931

Approved

Richard W. Russell

Mayor

SEP 17 1931



to the Mayor

H. Burdette
City Clerk

upon the record our tribute to his memory.

2. Affection. Recalling his faithfulness to public duty, we place his loss sustained in the untimely death of Henry William

lay down his life for his fellow citizens.
"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay

- 3 -

City of Cambridge

The City Council

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

August 18, 1931

To the Honorable, the City Council

I respectfully call your attention to the death of Lieutenant William J. Atkinson who died on August 17, 1931, as a result of heroic efforts to save the life of another. Lieutenant Atkinson had been a Cambridge fireman for thirty-one years; was appointed lieutenant and aide to the chief in 1911; later headed engine 7 and recently was assigned to engine 4, North Cambridge.

A thorough and detailed investigation of the cause of the sad death of Lieutenant Atkinson is being conducted. I asked Chief Casey to return from his vacation to assist in this investigation. I have conferred with him, Acting Chief Vose, Captain Gutheim, the Medical Examiner (Dr. David C. Dow), with experts on the use of gas masks and others. There are many important aspects of the case concerning which I have not yet been able to ascertain certain facts conclusively. As soon as completed, a report of the investigation will be made to your honorable body with recommendations in the event that further council action is necessary.

I respectfully recommend that suitable action be taken by your honorable body as a tribute of respect to the memory of Lieutenant William J. Atkinson, which action I shall be glad to approve.

In the meantime, I would appreciate it if the council would adopt an appropriation order for a smoke chamber and drill tower submitted to your honorable body on July 21, 1931, and the \$20,000.00 appropriation order submitted on May 19, 1931, for preliminary expenses for a new fire house in which to house new equipment recommended by the Chief.

Yours respectfully,

Richard W. Russell
Mayor

RMR:LMK

from the Mayor, transmitting
one from _____

Death of William J. Atkinson

Councillors Gibson, Sennott, Cazmay,
Coady, T.F. Murphy

In City Council. **AUG 18 1931**
Referred to a Special Committee

Thomas J. Cronin

Assistant City Clerk.

City of Cambridge

In City Council.....September 15, 1931

The Special

Committee on Resolutions of the
Death of Lieut. William J.
Atkinson

~~to exhibit~~

Reports,

Recommending the adoption of the
accompanying resolutions.

Thomas F. Gibson

For the Committee.

REPORT

Special

Committee on

Resolutions
death of Lieut Wm. J. Atkinson
member of the Fire Dept.

Sept. 15, 1931