

SEMPER FIDELIS.

RULES

AND

REGULATIONS

OF THE

Alert Relief Fire Society.

FORMED IN BOSTON, MARCH 1815,

BY THE UNION OF THE NEW BELIEF

ALERT FIRE SOCIETIES, THE FORMER

INSTITUTED OCT. 1787, THE

LATTER NOV. 19, 1787.



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PREAMBLE.

EXPERIENCE has taught mankind that the inhabitants of populous towns are continually exposed to severe calamities by Fire; and it is no less the result of observation, that Institutions may be formed, which, with the blessing of Heaven, will alleviate those calamities: The Subscribers, therefore, for the purpose of assisting each other in times of danger from Fire, and at the same time of cultivating that harmony and friendly intercourse which are so beneficial in a civil community, do agree to unite into a Society, by the name of the

Alert Relief Fire Society;

and, as members thereof, to be governed by the following Regulations:—

ARTICLE 1.

The Society may consist of thirty-five members, but no more. Before any person can be admitted a member, he must be proposed at a meeting previous to that on which he is balloted for;— and shall be admitted a member, if no

more than two negatives shall be found against him. When two or more candidates are proposed as members, no declaration of any choice shall be made until the whole number proposed shall have been balloted for. Every person admitted shall sign the articles of the Society.

ARTICLE 2.

The meetings of the Society shall be semi-annually, in January and July.— The meeting in January shall be in Boston, on the first Wednesday of the month, at 8 o'clock, P. M. ; that in July shall be out of town, at such place as a Committee chosen for the purpose shall appoint, at the January meeting. The roll shall be called in half an hour from the time fixed for the meeting ;— if a member be then absent, he shall pay a fine of *twenty cents* ; if absent the whole meeting, he shall pay the amount of his club, in addition. No person shall leave the meeting until he shall have settled with the Clerk, or appointed a substitute therefor. A member shall be liable to the same fine for any special meeting as for a semi-annual meeting.

ARTICLE 3.

The Officers of the Society shall be a Moderator and a Clerk. The Moderator shall at each meeting be designated from the list of the members in rotation, and in case of the absence of the regular member, the next present member shall take the chair. He shall preserve order, and if any member has anything to offer relative to the affairs of the Society, he shall address the Moderator. If two members rise at once to speak, the Moderator shall determine whose right it is first to speak; and if a member persists in speaking after being called to order by the Moderator, he shall pay a fine of *twenty-five* cents. The Clerk shall be chosen by ballot, and may continue in office during the pleasure of the Society. In case the person chosen Clerk should decline to accept, or the Clerk in office should resign, the Society shall then determine by lot the person who shall serve as Clerk, or pay a fine of *five dollars*, and continue the lot until one is found to serve.— He shall keep a fair record of all the proceedings of the Society, shall receive all monies, and demand fines; he shall notify the members of every meeting at

least two days before the same, by leaving, or causing to be left, a notification, at the dwelling of each member, and shall insert thereon the amount of the dues of such member, together with the names of persons proposed to become members, and the names of members removed. He shall notify at least one fifth part of the members of the Society, in their turns, to examine the buckets, bags, and bed keys of each member, and give them at least two days notice of the duty. The Clerk shall call or postpone a meeting of the society, upon application, in writing, of ten or more members. He shall demand the watchword from every member at each meeting. When he goes out of office, he shall deliver to his successor all the Funds, Books and Papers belonging to the Society ; and he shall be exempted from all expense of the meetings of the Society. The fines he shall collect shall be appropriated to the payment of the expenses of the Society. The Clerk shall be liable to the following fines :— For neglecting to keep a fair record of the proceedings of the Society, *two dollars*—for being absent at the time of roll call, *fifty cents*—for not calling the

roll, *one dollar*—for neglecting to notify members to inspect buckets, &c. *two dollars*—for neglecting to demand fines semi-annually, *fifty cents*—for neglecting to notify members of each meeting, *one dollar*—for neglecting to demand the watch word, *seventy-five cents*.—The Moderator shall collect the fines of the Clerk, and be accountable therefor.

ARTICLE 4.

The Society shall adopt a watch-word, whereby to distinguish each other, which shall continue until changed by the Society. Every member, when challenged, shall whisper the same to the Clerk, under penalty of *twenty five cents*. And if any member shall at any meeting presume to reveal the watch-word to any other member than the Clerk, he shall forfeit *twenty-five cents*—and if to any other person shall pay *one dollar*.

ARTICLE 5.

Each member shall constantly keep together, in good order, hanging in some conspicuous place in his dwelling-house, two uniformly painted leather Buckets, two Bags, each one yard and a half long, and one yard and a half round, with

strings at the mouth that they may be drawn up with greater dispatch, and one iron Bed-Key. The Buckets and Bags to be marked with the first letters of the owner's christian name, and his surname at full length, under penalty of *one dollar* for each Bucket, Bag or Bed-Key deficient ; and if it shall appear that either of the Buckets or Bags of any member has been put to any other use than removing goods, or assisting the Society in time of fire, the owner of such Buckets and Bags shall pay a fine of *one dollar*, for each Bucket or Bag so misused. Any member who may lose his Buckets and Bags, or either of them, at any fire, shall be furnished with others at the expense of the Society, after using all suitable means of recovering those lost, and advertising the same in some public newspaper.

ARTICLE 6.

In order that the members should be well acquainted with the houses, stores and shops of each other, and the avenues leading thereto, the Clerk shall notify one fifth part of the members in their turn, to proceed to examine the Buckets, Bags and Bed-Key of each member respectively. They shall have at

least two days notice of being designated for this duty, and shall report thereon at the next meeting. Any member who neglects or refuses to make the examination after having been regularly notified by the Clerk, or to procure one of his brothers to walk for him, shall pay *three dollars*, unless prevented by sickness, or other satisfactory cause, to be deemed such by the Society.

ARTICLE 7.

On the alarm of fire, every member shall repair with his Buckets, Bags and Bed-Key, where it happens, and if the house, store or shop of any member or members be in danger, every member who is not exposed, shall assemble there with his Bags and Bed-Key, and use his best endeavors, at the direction of the person or persons in danger, to remove and secure all his or their goods and effects. Every member who shall absent himself at such a time without some cause satisfactory to the Society, shall be liable to be expelled.

ARTICLE 8.

Each member shall keep a printed copy of these articles, in which shall be inscribed the names of the members,

their places of abode and business ;— and when any member shall remove, he shall inform the Clerk thereof, in writing, within one week of such removal, under penalty of *one dollar* ; and the Clerk shall notify the same on the next notification ; and each member shall conform his book thereto, and bring the same, complete, at the next meeting, under a penalty of *one dollar*.

ARTICLE 9.

No person shall, on any occasion, be invited to the meetings of the Society.

ARTICLE 10.

Any member who shall neglect or refuse to observe these articles, and pay any forfeiture he may have incurred when demanded by the Clerk, or Moderator, or who shall absent himself three meetings successively, unless having gone out of the State, shall no longer be considered a member of the Society ;— and shall not be admitted again without the usual ceremonies of election. And if any member is dissatisfied with the proceedings of the Society, he may withdraw himself from it, relinquishing all right in the Society's Stock ; and if any member shall directly or indirectly dis-



turb or interrupt the good order of the Society, he shall, without delay, upon conviction, by the vote of two thirds of the members, be expelled from it, and forfeit all his right and interest in said Society.

ARTICLE 11.

In case a member dies, and leaves a widow, she shall, (while she remains a widow,) be entitled to the protection of the Society, in same manner as though her husband were living, she giving information of her removal to any brother, who is hereby directed to inform the Clerk thereof.

ARTICLE 12.

The members reciprocally engage to conduct themselves towards each other in friendship and love, and will endeavor to promote the interest of each other, and on all occasions cultivate an esteem and affection as brothers, and fellow members of a Society, instituted for mutual benefit.