

18 Craigmore Road
Rothesay

18th April 1865

*The Committee and members of the Ballarat West Fire Brigade.
Gentlemen and Brother Firemen.*

I observed in the Ballarat Star, that at the last general meeting and election of officers, you had again appointed me your chief officer. I beg to assure you it is with no ordinary feelings of gratification and pleasure that I find you doing me such an honour year after year, and the more so at this time amidst my sufferings which have been very severe for some time back

I had hoped to be in Ballarat ere this, and at active business again, but have been sadly disappointed

Of all the medical advice I have had, no encouragement has been given me, that I will again be able to resume active duties.

Indeed I am requested by all of them to give up everything having the least tendency to excite me or cause any oppression what ever, as it is only by extreme care and caution that there is any hope of prolonging my life. At present I cannot walk many yards.

Under the circumstances and conditions, I consider it my duty to continue to hold a position in the Brigade which I see no possibility of fulfilling properly, and also preventing another gentleman from attaining to. I therefore place my resignation in your hands with extreme regret.

Nothing in the course of life has given me more deep concern or grief than thus to be compelled to relinquish what I have ever prized as one of my greater public honours; but it must be, and if I am spared to return to Ballarat, one of the greatest pleasures I will have, will be to meet so many friends as the Brigade at all times have proved to be to me.

I may say I trace my disease to the great fire on the Flat November three years past, when a large oil and kerosene store was burned. Being overheated and nearly suffocated by fumes and smoke, when flames burst out, I gulped down a large quantity of cold water without the least consideration. Ever after that I felt myself coming down. I mention the above fact as a warning and caution to the members of the Brigade to be guarded at fires when exhausted and overheated, and when thirst is severe as a very little imprudence will entail serious consequences.

As to my uniform, I will either send it out to the Brigade, or bring it out when I come out. My intention at present is to spend the summer here and if able at all, to come out, leaving here about the latter end of September. With every wish for the prosperity of the Brigade, and an earnest desire for your individual welfare.

I remain yours truly,

M. Campbell