

COUNTY OF AVON FIRE BRIGADE

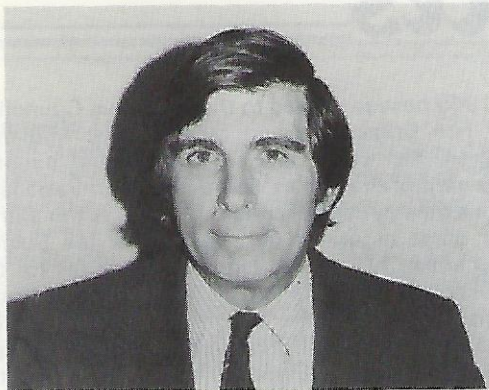
MAGAZINE

JUNE 1982



Editorial

How can you describe burns such as these —reported by the Press as 'not serious', 'satisfactory'? How do you describe the intense pain and suffering or the scarring?



I am very pleased to have the opportunity of saying a few words to all members through the Brigade magazine.

I am conscious of the fact that at times the Public Protection Committee must appear to be a rather remote body of individuals whose knowledge of the Brigade is rather restricted. May I say at once that all members take a very keen interest in all activities and are very much alive to their responsibilities of ensuring that the Brigade receives the support commensurate with its very important function of saving lives and property.

As a committee, and as individuals, we have visited many of the Stations and have been made aware of those aspects that leave something to be desired. Within the financial constraints placed upon us we shall endeavour to give effect to those improvements which will enable you to perform your duties to the highest degree of efficiency.

On this point may I say how much I was impressed by the manner in which the Brigade tackled the Pendennis explosion. As an onlooker I was able to see at first hand the professionalism of the Brigade and it gave me great pleasure and satisfaction to report as much to my committee. This was also the case at the serious floods emergency earlier this year, when the Brigade worked so unstintingly in their efforts to relieve the distress caused to so many people.

My thanks and best wishes to you all.

*Terry Walker (councillor)
Chairman
Avon Public Protection Committee*



In many public services very minor injuries bring with them sympathy and demands for improvement in conditions and various forms of recompense, but for the fire service it is what we are paid for and part of the job. Only last month we mentioned two colleagues in Gloucestershire who were badly injured, although, according to the Press, 'Not serious', 'Satisfactory' (loss of all fingers and scarring, and paralysed from chest down). I call that serious.

Regretfully it is the price which has to be paid for the protection of life and property against the elements. Last year in Avon 157 firemen received injuries whilst dealing with incidents.

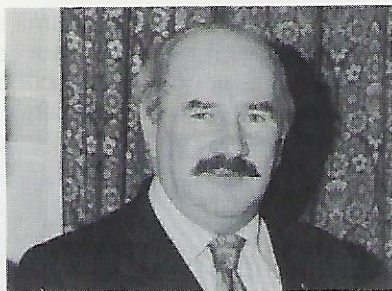
Copy for the magazine should be forwarded to Stn.O. D. Hutchings at Headquarters (Tel. Bristol 22061, ext. 272) by June 21 for inclusion in the August issue.

Opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or Publishers and may not represent the official opinion of the County of Avon Fire Brigade.

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Faces and Places

TERRY PARRY



The former general secretary of the Fire Brigades Union, Terence Parry, CBE, died in April 1982 following a major operation in a London hospital. He had suffered a long period of pain and discomfort and died within six months of his retirement. A contingent from the Avon Fire Brigade attended the funeral service in London, where many people from every walk of life, including his family, the union, the Home Office, employers, politicians, trades unionists, pensioners and many hundreds of uniformed firemen paid their last respects to a great man. The service was all the more moving because Terry had left instructions as to how the service should be carried out. It was conducted by Bruce Kent, the chaplain of CND, addressed by Jack Jones and Len Murray and included an aria, 'The Impossible Dream'.

Terry had a remarkable life and career in the trade union movement, working not just on behalf of firemen but for the working class throughout the world. After serving in the Merchant and then the Royal Navy, he joined the fire service in 1946 and led a revolt about conditions at his training school.

In 1949 he was elected to the Executive Council of the Fire Brigades Union by the West Midlands Region. Ten years later he was elected national president of the Union, and a couple of years later he became general secretary. Terry was the author and prime mover of the 'Service for the Sixties' programme which was largely responsible for the elevation of firemen and the service to their present status. He piloted the Union and the fire service through a period of change and difficulties, culminating in the national strike of 1977 and the achievement of the firemen's pay formula.

Following his election in the late 1960s to the General Council of the TUC, Terry continued to represent firemen; he was a stalwart of the Social Insurance Committee and latterly its chairman, fighting for child benefit, pensions, etc. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Health and Safety at Work Act, and was subsequently appointed to the HSE Commission. In 1981 Terry was elected president of the TUC and achieved one of his ambitions in 1981 by chairing the TUC annual conference.

Terry was a man of compassion and principle, a man who gave his life in the service of his fellow men. He had a dry sense of humour, and brightened many a dull moment with a joke. I record my pleasure at having known Terry Parry and it was a privilege to have worked with him.

My thoughts are with Doris and the family Terry left behind. They were often left alone when he was working for us over the years, and now, after such a short retirement, alone again.

As a postscript I can tell you that Terry had a dog; he named it 'Upper Quartile'. Long may it run—we owe Terry Parry so much.

Front cover



A Brigade driving school appliance at Royal Air Force, Colerne.

Following the two-weeks' HGV course and the passing of the driving test, drivers now do a weeks advanced driving using the Dodge Water Tender Escape. During this week a day is spent on the

runways at RAF Colerne. The aim of the extended course is to familiarise drivers with the handling characteristics of a fire appliance, in particular at speed, and this is where the runways come into their own. A route is marked out using cones and drivers can quickly and safely learn the limitations of appliances.

This is something the Brigade has always wanted, but the problem has always been the right venue. It is also intended to incorporate this part of the training in refresher courses for front-line appliance drivers.

Both the driving instructors, Sub.O. Malcolm Aston and Brian Denning, are delighted with the facility and say it forms a very important part of the course, and is something which has always been lacking.

It's hello to Gail

Gail Nash joined the Brigade in March and will work in the A Division F.P. Department at Yate, following a week at H.Q. getting to know about the work in the Brigade.

We caught up with Gail when she was being shown around the station. She said: "I am truly amazed at the type of work the Brigade becomes involved in and what the firemen have to know."

Gail lives at Yate and her hobbies include darts, squash, dancing and cake decorating.



Gail, and her H.Q. guide, Fm Sedgemoor.

Retirements

George Ham retires after nearly 30 years with the Brigade. He served with the 4th Battalion of the Somerset Light Infantry and was in Germany from 1945 to 1948. Following his discharge from the armed services he joined Stothert and Pitt as an engineer fitter, but missed the service life, so he joined the Bath Fire and Ambulance Service as a fire/ambulance man, but he was also appointed the watch mechanic.

Gentleman George, as he is known, is a man with a wealth of experience and will be missed by all at B1. He does not have any hard and fast plans for his retirement, only to enjoy life with his wife Jean.

Good luck, George, and we wish you all the best for your retirement.



George Ham with his wife Jeanie receiving a presentation from C.F.O. Ponsford.

Dave Rogers retires after nearly 30 years with the Brigade. He joined following a period in the Royal Marines, when he served on HMS *Anson* and HMS *Vanguard*.

Dave has always been very keen on music and for many years worked with Pete Stone in a musical comedy duo called the Crackerjacks. They had several chances of becoming professionals, once following auditions at the Windmill Theatre Club, but the Fire Brigade came first and the Crackerjacks went. However, Dave soon joined forces with other members of Blue Watch at Bridewell to form the Blue Flames Dance Band, with the top flat being used as the rehearsal room. The other original members were Den Thompson, now retired, Brian Pocock, Tony Stonehouse, Paul Harding and Clive English. They became very successful, but Dave was still not satisfied so he took over the running of the Northwinds Scout Band and within three years took them to the National Championships, which eventually they won. But Dave still felt restricted because it was a scout band, so he formed the Bristol Unicorns, and this has proved his ultimate success, as since their start in 1979, with just a meeting, they have become internationally known and have won scores of trophies, including the National Show Band Championships.

The band is a tremendous success, with involvement for over 100 youngsters and to be appreciated they must be seen. In talking to Dave to find the key to his success, he said: "First and foremost it is discipline, coupled with enthusiasm." I am sure we would all congratulate Dave on his success with the band and wish him all the best for the future. This year they are off to Holland and their intentions are to travel abroad as much as possible.

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FACES AND PLACES



Dave served most of his time at Bridewell on Blue Watch and in 1973 was posted to Training School as a driving and special appliance instructor. In 1979 he was awarded the British Empire Medal for services to the Brigade and his deep involvement with the youth of today. He is very sad in many ways to be leaving, although he has built up many strong links with the Brigade, which will be maintained.

Asking him about the changes he has seen in the service during his time, he said: "Many changes have been drastic, relating to appliances and equipment, making today's firemen more efficient", but he feels there is more room for improvement, especially discipline, which would improve the image to match the improvement in equipment and conditions.

Best wishes and good luck to you and your family for the future, Dave.



C.F.O. Ponsford receives a leather and brass helmet for the Brigade museum from John Cano who was involved with the work on the new BA room at HQ. John was given some fire kit that had not been used since 1930.

FACES AND PLACES

Charity tour

Nottinghamshire Fire Brigade have made a tour of every Brigade in Great Britain, Barry Maltby and Mike Stone exchanging cap badges in every Brigade. They used a Ford Cortina Crusader identical to the one donated by the Ford Motor Company to the National Fire Service Benevolent Fund, which is to be raffled.

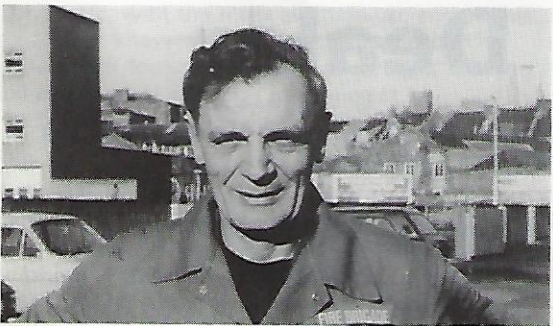
Barry and Mike reported that on their tour of the country many Brigades had already sold over £5,000 of tickets and it is anticipated that a great deal of money will be raised on the car.



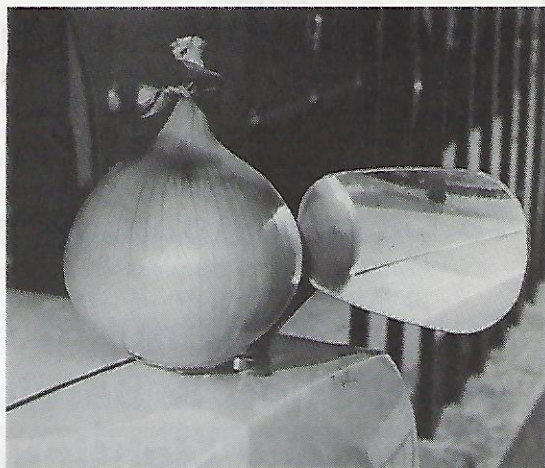
Know your onions

Jim Cecil now works in the Brigade workshops. He first joined the national fire service following active service with the Royal Marine Commandos. During his time in the Brigade he served at Ilfracombe, Bridgwater, Bedminster, then finally at Bridewell. After he had completed 30 years with the Brigade he took an extended holiday of a lifetime, visiting family in Adelaide, South Australia.

Jim's main hobby now is gardening, specialising in growing large onions and carnations. His tips for



Jim Cecil ...



... and his 2-lb onion.

the onion grower: get a good fine tilth in the soil; with a dibber make a hole about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch deep; drop in the onion set. Repeat at 9-inch intervals, ideally when the moon is waxing (this is when it's getting bigger). Feed weekly, keeping onion bed free from weeds; harvest late August. With luck each onion should be at least 2 lbs in weight.

Good luck.

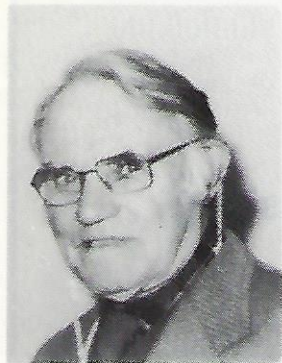
Where are they now?

A tale from Doc Wheatley

It was a Sunday morning, and I was busy moving from Bristol to Chew Magna. The next job was to go to Bristol, dismantle a large greenhouse and re-erect it at Chew, so I put on old dungarees and a plaid shirt and set off.

I'd been dismantling about an hour when a Brigade vehicle pulled up and the driver, the late Harvey Hayfield, told me there was a ship fire at Avonmouth docks and as I was O.I.C. of the Brigade stores in Rupert Street I had to report there immediately to release the equipment to fight the fire.

So while Harvey reported to Bridewell that he had contacted me I set off for the stores, dirty as I was, only to find, on arrival, that I did not have my keys with me. Determined not to be beaten, I proceeded to gain entrance by a way known only to me, but unfortunately I was seen by the licensee of the pub in Lewins Mead. This good lady, seeing

Doc. Wheatley

a very grubby person breaking into the Fire Brigade stores, proceeded to ring the police, while I, in my innocence, began to get together the necessary equipment.

Shortly the front-door bell rang and thinking it was Harvey, I raised the roller shutters to let the vehicle in to be loaded with the required gear. But it was not Harvey. Instead three plain-clothes detectives stood there and, despite my explanations, they would not believe a word I said. Meanwhile, Harvey arrived, but he did not come to my aid, he simply went on with the loading of equipment, whilst I was taken over to the charge office at police headquarters at Bridewell.

Naturally all I had to do was to get one of the Senior Officers at Brigade headquarters to come over and identify me. But, as was the custom of a Sunday morning, they were having their drinks at Davenport's and were very unwilling to come and bail me out. Eventually, at about 2.30 p.m. I was identified and allowed to go. But it has been said that had they realised who I was they would have made me sweat a great deal longer, and for the remainder of my service in the Brigade my apprehension by the Bristol police was something I had to live with.

But the mind boggles with the thoughts I had of that great store, with its vast quantities of shoes, clothes, etc, with the roller shutters up, and to this day I never knew who let the shutters down.

(Doc, still looking as good as ever, is keeping well and lives at Butleigh in Somerset.)

A picture to jolt your memories

Thanks to Ern Bigwood (110), now retired and living at Worle, Weston-super-Mare, for sending in the photo and the poem. So let's hear about some of the others; what are they doing now and what was the occasion?

Doctors

Doctors, we all have to have 'em,
To visit is sometimes a cure:
You go in, of course, 'cause you're not feeling well,
Often come out a ruddy sight worse.
You may wait an hour in the surgery
With thousands of germs in the air
And probably catch something worse than you
had.

Do they worry, do they even care?
As you enter the room to approach them,
You daren't say that you've waited long;
They write a prescription without looking up
And without even asking what's wrong!
If you open your mouth to say something,
Then they think you're a neurotic twin.
You take the prescription and even say thanks,
Quite unable to read what's on it.
And as we take our pills and our potions—
And take them as some of us must—
We all know quite well we're just here for a spell
And eventually turn into dust.
So why don't we all count our blessings
And give one another a smile,
For God made us all, even doctors,
So he must have thought them worthwhile.
I wonder why they seem so distant?
For them to be friendly we'd love,
But, to tell the truth, I'm not really uncouth,
I'd agree with the Lord up above.
I expect that they, too, get their off days:
If they're ill, take a pill like the rest,
But when I get the blues, can you guess who I
choose?

He's my doctor and one of the best.
It's good that we are an assortment,
I'd like to pass on this advice: It's nice to be
someone important
But, much more important, be nice.



What was the occasion? Who are they, and what are they doing now?



Trevor Fry tests his 'head for heights' on the 100' turntable ladder (left) and tries his hand with a jet (above).



Trevor Fry visits A1 Temple

Trevor Fry, from Radio West, spent a day at A1 Temple in the company of White Watch whilst making a programme about a day in the life of a fireman.

Trevor participated in all aspects of the daily routines. He first went with BA teams down the sewer and searched the basement for a casualty, then a composite drill in the station yard enabled him to feel the reaction of a jet and climb the turntable ladder. This was followed by a PT session taken by Ron Norley, the senior man on the shift, who is retiring this year. He was then given a well-earned cup of tea. He interviewed members of the shift, from the oldest and most experienced to the youngest, and was shown around all the appliances and equipment carried. This was followed by a selection of fire prevention visits and hydrant patrol. Unfortunately fire calls were thin on the ground that morning, but shortly before lunch there was a call to an RTA in Winterstoke Road, Bedminster, with the ET, which he attended and at the same time the Brigade received some six calls for assistance.

A very good spot on Radio West resulted, and Trevor wishes to return again, to spend some more time with the Brigade.

Technical committee

At the April meeting of the Brigade Technical Committee a suggestion proposed by L.Fm J. Radcliffe, C1 Weston-super-Mare, was accepted and was recognised with an award of £5.00.

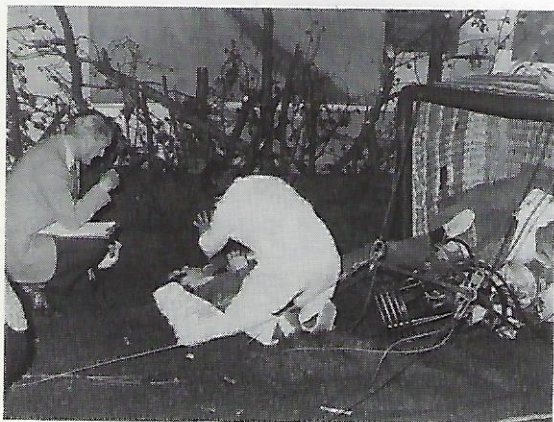
The suggestion was the provision of salvage pegs which can be used for securing salvage sheets on roofs, etc. This simple idea was considered to have considerable merit and will be adopted by the Brigade. Those appliances within the Brigade which are designed for salvage operations will be equipped with a supply of the salvage pegs.

First aid

The sixth open first-aid competition for the Jimmy White Memorial Trophy took place in the Brigade Training School on Saturday, 24 April. The team test involved a ballooning incident (thanks to Cameron Balloons), with two casualties. The test looked very impressive, as you can see by the photograph. This year teams came from as far afield as Derbyshire, Cornwall and Mid Wales, and they were all very impressed by the standard. Although competition work has its shortcomings, it still remains the most efficient way to train first-aiders under a certain amount of pressure.

The overall winners of the competition were the National Dock Labour Board team from Swansea. The trophies were presented by Mrs Irene Tout, who was Jimmy's widow and is now married to retired Fireman Charlie Tout.

In his summary the Chief Fire Officer pointed out that the most important thing he had learned from the competition was that it may be wise not to go up in a balloon in view of the extreme flimsiness of the material.



Chris Myles on holiday in USA

During my 21 days in Florida I struck up a friendship with a fireman in the Florida State Fire Department, and on making comparisons I found fire kit worn by the Americans was in many ways superior to ours but equipment and appliances were very similar.

A notable difference was in the way in which the Rescue Tenders operated with the Paramedics, involving extensive training and very close co-operation, with no animosity between the services and a clear definition regarding rescue calls. They never had situations where people could stay trapped while the police or ambulance crews called the Brigade when their efforts failed. All rescue work is carried out by the Brigade; they have no restrictive practices and have a no-strike clause with a guaranteed pay formula similar to ours, linked to earnings of others. Each state has its own pay structure and all Fire Departments have been removed from the political arena, both locally and nationally. Every station has full-time rescue crews, both for fire and special service, and in the rural areas there is a retained back-up system.

Other areas visited were the Everglades Alligator Park, the Kennedy Space Centre (in fact I watched the space shuttle take off) and Disneyworld—a must for all visitors. The temperature ranged from 74 to 84°F, with low humidity and all in all it was a fantastic holiday and the hospitality of the Fire Department was tremendous.

Here's a point worthy of mention. If you are thinking about a trip, women outnumber men four to one.

For sale—1976 Suzuki 380GT. Black, immaculate condition, only £350. Bill Lewis, A2. Telephone Bristol 49199.

For sale—1967 Mini 850 Saloon. £135 spent on M.O.T. Tax until December 1982, M.O.T. until April 1983. Good runner in good condition. £250 negotiable. Contact C. Tudor (A5) or Bristol 696829 (home).

For sale—Ferguson TX colour television, 22", brand new with maker's guarantee. Over £300 new—£200. Contact Dave Hutchings, HQ. 214.

Time on your hands?

Let OXFAM help you fill your time and so help the less fortunate people of the world to help themselves. Most people nowadays have *some* idea of what Oxfam is all about, but let me start by putting it in a nutshell.

Oxfam believes in the essential dignity of people and their capacity to overcome the problems and pressures which can crush or exploit them. It is a partnership of people who share this belief—people who, regardless of race, sex, religion or politics, work together for the basic human rights of food, shelter and reasonable conditions of life.

What is not generally understood is that, in achieving the objectives set out, Oxfam does not pour people and resources into the areas of need. On the contrary, the worldwide influence exerted by the organisation is, in the main, achieved using only a handful of expatriate personnel and financially supporting a wide range of self-help projects undertaken by the native peoples of the countries in which we work. The financial help given in this way is administered and carefully monitored by our own field staff to ensure that it is properly used and accounted for. In almost every instance it goes directly to those in greatest need.

Notwithstanding the fact that Oxfam has but a small need for volunteers overseas, and for highly qualified people at times of disaster, it is almost wholly a volunteer movement—paid staff, necessary to provide a framework and to ensure continuity, represent no more than 2.5 per cent approximately of a work-force of thousands. The whole of the overseas programme in relation to both short-term disaster relief and long-term development work is made possible by the unstinting fund-raising and public-opinion-forming work of thousands of volunteers in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

In this country Oxfam has become to some degree identified with fund-raising through shops, and it is true we would be in poor fettle without them and without the thousands of volunteers who have our lasting gratitude for running them. If you would like to work in an Oxfam shop there is almost sure to be an opportunity near your home.

However this is not the whole story—a recent survey produced a list of more than 80 different jobs for which we would welcome voluntary help on a countrywide basis. Let's look at a few samples from our booklet *OXFAM Voluntary Service*:

7. Clerical and typing assistants

To help with a variety of office work—particularly at times of national appeals.

11. Group treasurers

To run an Oxfam Group's bank account and monitor the procedures for receiving and disbursing cash to ensure conformity with Finance Department guidelines.

15. Fashion advisors

To guide volunteers on quality, style and value of donated clothing, particularly ladies' clothing, with a view to accurate pricing, sizing and display.

26. Car drivers

To help collect donated goods, make deliveries between shops, etc.

31. Pledged gift collectors

To extend the field of operations of the Pledged Gift Scheme in particular localities by recruiting new donors willing to pledge a fixed sum monthly to Oxfam.

86. Oxfam group members (non shop)

Raising funds by any means that ingenuity can devise, whilst enjoying the companionship of like-minded people.

There are many more. Perhaps you might wish to exercise a talent for public speaking, art display or plain organising ability—there's a job for you in Oxfam voluntary service, provided only that you are the right person in the right place at the right time.

I think we all have something to offer each other, which is what Oxfam is all about—partnership. I hope I will hear from you.

C. G. Hunter, Volunteers Co-ordinator, Oxfam House, 274 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7DZ.

There are many ways you may be able to help—even people with a knowledge of health and safety at work are needed.

Contact Stn.O. Hutchings, Extension 214, for the booklet.

The pedestrian had no idea which direction to run, so I ran over him.

I saw a slow-moving, sad-faced old gentleman as he bounced off the roof of my car.

The indirect cause of the accident was a little guy in a small car with a big mouth.

Actual statements from insurance forms.

Call out

Children in fire trouble

The weekend of 24 April provided a somewhat painful and expensive time for children playing with fire. Two calls, very close together, one in Bristol and the other in Bath, were caused by children playing with matches.

In Bath a six-year-old girl ended up in Frenchay Hospital suffering from burns to her face, hands and arms, and had to be rescued by a neighbour following early morning play in the family's home whilst her mother and a younger sister were in bed. Her rescuer, Martin Scott-Drew, made several attempts to cross the blazing lounge before he found the child cut off by fire in the kitchen. Mr Scott-Drew successfully brought the girl to safety, sustaining cuts to his hands and legs and inhalation of smoke. He refused hospital treatment.

The officer in charge of the incident, Stn.O. Terry Gazzard, praised the heroic and brave actions of Mr Scott-Drew and has submitted a report to the C.F.O. for consideration for his deed.

The second incident cost a family of seven their home in Easton when children, waking up early on the Saturday morning, played with matches in their attic bedroom. A nine-year-old boy became frightened and alerted his parents. When the father found the fire it was still in its incipient stages and he attempted to put it out with a damp tea towel but unfortunately did not succeed. Tragically they spent time in moving their possessions from the home before calling the fire brigade. They also assisted their neighbours in moving their furniture.

When B6 eventually received the call the smoke could be seen from the station forecourt, and on arrival they found the whole roof area well alight and the fire spreading down into the first floor.

When will they ever learn? A call to the Brigade by a neighbour or by the man himself before he attempted to deal with the fire could easily have saved their home.

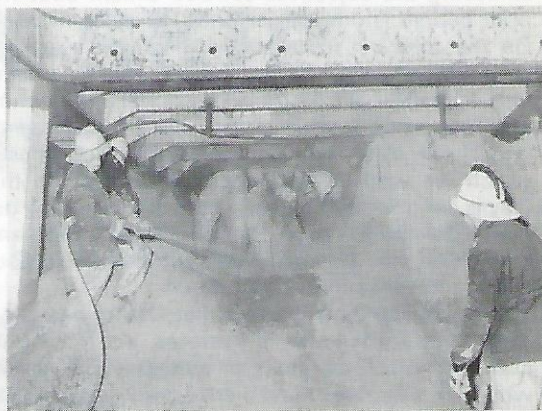
Life saver

Whilst D.O. Ray Southard was proceeding to Brigade headquarters from Keynsham he noticed a small crowd gathered around a young lady laid on the pavement. He ensured that an ambulance had been called then found she had stopped breathing, so he immediately started mouth-to-mouth, when he was joined by an off-duty policeman who gave external cardiac massage. When the ambulance arrived she was regaining consciousness and following treatment at the BRI she was discharged.

Ship fire

A successful operation was led by the C.F.O. on the 15 000-tonne MV *Alexandros Ismine*, carrying a cargo of rice beans.

On arrival Stn.O. Keith White A3 found large volumes of smoke issuing from number three hold and the inspection hatches. Entry into the hold via the inspection hatches was impossible, as the cargo completely blocked the entry point, so jets were laid out and D.O. Roy Kennedy made eight pumps for BA and the main hatch covers were removed. The C.F.O. took command of fire-fighting operations, and digging out and damping down in BA commenced. The incident lasted nine hours and was closed down at 0930 hours the following day.



Digging out the cargo and damping down—a dirty job

One man and his dog

C1 Weston, Red Watch, carried out a rescue in South Parade, Weston-super-Mare. On arrival at the three-storey premises Stn.O. Haskins was informed that a man and his dog were still in the burning building. Firemen in breathing apparatus entered the premises and they found an 18-year-old man collapsed in the kitchen window. Leading Fireman Brian Gillett, Fm Andy Dade, Terry Caddy and John Britton carried him to safety, then re-entered and brought out a black labrador dog which was also suffering the effects of smoke.

The victim was taken to Weston General Hospital suffering from the effects of smoke and the dog was taken away by the RSPCA. Fire severely damaged the second-floor flat, and three of the victim's colleagues were taken away by police for questioning.

Careless car repairer

B1 Bath dealt with a very hazardous fire situation at Monkton Coombe, where Leading Fireman Brian Love and Fm Peter Morgan and David Rose were all injured and conveyed to hospital when an explosion occurred as they entered a blazing workshop, knocking all three men some ten metres.



A garage full of bombs. The two acetylene cylinders in the background exploded, the other two were found to be unstable and had to be submersed and cooled for several hours.

Leading Fireman Love was detained in the Royal United Hospital with very nasty and painful burns to his face, plus neck, ears and legs. The other two firemen were later released following treatment for shock and bruising.

The occupier had been welding the inside of a car when he had to go away to collect some more materials. On his return he found his workshop well alight. During the course of the fire two acetylene



All that remained of the garage and contents at Claversham.

cylinders exploded. The contents and the garage were virtually destroyed along with a Morris Marina and a cabin cruiser.

Station Officer Alan Lawson led this very dangerous and tricky operation.

House fire with complications

A2 Southmead were called to a house fire in Westleigh Road, Southmead, shortly before midnight. On arrival they found the body of an elderly man lying in the front garden with a younger man semi-conscious by his side, and the ground floor well alight. Sub-Officer Dick Green immediately ordered first aid and resuscitation for the victims and an attack on the fire.

It transpired that the younger man was suffering the effects of smoke following the rescue of the elderly man. Fireman Ben Hollier spent some fifteen minutes trying to revive the victim, unfortunately to no avail.

Mr Peter Barnes, aged 36, fought his way through thick smoke and intense heat to find and rescue his neighbour. Tragically the victim was to have entered a home the following day for he was unable to look after himself.



Fire damage to the floor and settee at Westleigh Road, Southmead.

Odd spot

Sub.O. Gamblin, A5, responded to a lorry fire on the M5. On arrival they found that the fire had been dealt with in its early stages, using its own load, MILK.

Another use for your daily pinta? No, before you ask, A.C.O. Boyne would not be happy to see bottles of milk replacing extinguishers in buildings.



Severe fire damage to the first floor and roof of a house in Church Street, Easton.

A tricky rescue operation for B5 Keynsham and Rescue Tender from B1. A girl was trapped in the wreckage of the car by her leg which had gone through the floor. The car was precariously balanced on a bank and all the near side suspension and steering gear had to be removed to release her.



Busy rescuers

Two rescue operations with a difference were carried out in A Division on the same day. The first was at Avonmouth incinerator, where a member of a dustcart crew fell into a pit where their load had just been tipped, fortunately it was half full of refuse so he fell about 35 feet instead of 65 feet. He was treated for leg and back injuries then carried to safety using two ladders, with the casualty strapped to an ambulance service scoop stretcher. He was conveyed to Southmead Hospital.

The second was in Bishopston, where a man working on a roof of a four-storey house collapsed in an epileptic fit. Fortunately for him it was a double-pitch roof and he fell into the valley. He was rescued by A1 using a turntable ladder and paraguard stretcher. Fireman Alan Perry escorted the casualty in the Bosun's chair.

LPG explosion in St Pauls

Extensive damage to a house in St Pauls was caused by a 10-oz LPG cartridge exploding when being used as the main cooking appliance in the house. Every window in the house had glass blown out and the ceilings in the bathroom and the bedroom were lifted when leaking gas ignited, blowing the bottom of the cartridge out.

On examination of the stove it was found that the incorrect cylinder was fitted, about three inches too long, and the 'O' ring seal was broken. A previous leak had been repaired with fibre glass on a greasy stove and a damaged cartridge was also used.

The officer in charge of the incident, Stn.O. Ivor Player, commenting on the extent of damage inside a substantial house, said: "It is horrifying to think what injuries could have happened if this type of cartridge had exploded in a confined space with people inside, such as a small tent or caravan".



So much damage by such a small item.

Sick arsonist

A2 Southmead were called to a small printing firm in Eastville. On arrival they found the fire on the first floor. The crew was sent in BA via the first floor window with a spray jet to knock the fire down and, to their horror, found five one-gallon cans full of petrol set about the first floor as incendiary devices. Had any one of these already heated cans exploded it could certainly have maimed, if not killed, those crew members.



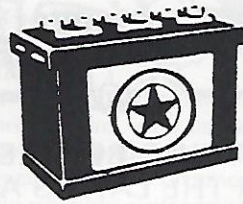
Petrol cans, placed as incendiary devices, found on the first floor.

We are all aware of the hazards and the risks that are taken daily in the protection of life and property, but when added to by such sick and evil devices as these it can only make you shudder. We've all seen the devastation of a petrol bomb made out of a milk bottle can cause, so it does not take much imagination to realise what could have happened if those five cans had exploded, as was intended by the sick arsonist. Totally inexcusable, whether it was for revenge, a grudge or profit.



Extent of fire damage in a good save.

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Bath half marathon

The inaugural Bath half marathon was held on Sunday, 21 March, with 10 Brigade members competing. Basically, the course was a two-lap $\frac{2}{3}$ circuit, going out along the Upper Bristol Road and turning back along the Lower Bristol Road at the Newbridge Turnpike. It was a flat, fast course and attracted over 1400 entries of all standards.

Position	Name	Time
90	A. Lawson	75 min 3 sec
347	P. Jones	85 min 50 sec
351	M. Mullany	85 min 56 sec
487	K. Escott	90 min 25 sec
552	P. Marsh	93 min
714	A. Palmer	99 min
900	R. Wise	107 min 16 sec
947	P. Prowze	111 min
992	A. Stonehouse, P. Hawkins	116 min 5 sec

Everybody enjoyed their run.

South West District Rugby Final.

Avon v Cornwall

The match was played at Wellington R.F.C., Somerset, and it was soon obvious that Avon were to dominate the forward play. Cornwall scored first with a 45-metre drop goal from a free kick, giving them a three-point lead. This was followed by a penalty kick to make it 6-0 by half time.

Avon started the second half with the same determination as in the first half and eventually the pressure proved too great and a try had to come. This resulted from the only penalty awarded to us within 40 metres of the Cornwall line. Allan Bradley crashed over for a try from a set piece started by Steve Kelly and Dave Appleton made no mistake in converting, which brought the score to 6-6. Avon kept up the pressure yet could not score again. With less than ten minutes to go, Cornwall broke out by kicking into the centre of the field from behind their 22-metre line. When an Avon player fell on the ball the referee awarded a penalty to Cornwall. This was easily kicked by their full back giving them a three-point lead and victory by 9 points to 6.

The Chief Officer of Somerset presented the cup and congratulated both teams for a really superb final.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Chris Millard, who captained the side, and all the players who turned up for this match, all of whom travelled quite a distance, even though they were only possible replacements.

Forwards	Backs
Pat O'Brien (C Div.)	Dave Appleton (A Div.)
Kevin Heskot (B Div.)	Dave Clark (C Div.)
Martin Rundle (C Div.)	Steve Cornish (C Div.)
Clive Shortman (B Div.)	Pete Jones (A Div.)
John Bissicks (B Div.)	Pete Elson (A Div.)
Allan Bradley (C Div.)	Bob Williams (A Div.)
Chris Millard (C Div.)	John Rice (A Div.)
Derek Hone (A Div.)	John Taylor (C Div.)
Steve Kelly (B Div.)	Pete Hopcraft (C Div.)
	Andy Gover (B Div.)

A mention must also be made of 'Spud' Webber, the District and England selector, who made all the arrangements with the Wellington R.F.C.

As I have now retired from the rugby scene I would like to convey a very special thanks to Martin Rundle of C5 for many hours' work, not only as fixture secretary but also calling up players and being mediator between A, B and C Divisions. Also Steve Kelly (B1), John Rice (A5), Andy Coe (B4), not forgetting all the lads who always turned out throughout the past years.

It is also fitting that Senior Officers and Divisional Commanders should be thanked for their efforts and understanding in enabling the rugby team to function.

Wolverhampton marathon

Alan Lawson scorched round in the Wolverhampton marathon, to finish in a Brigade record of 2 hours, 48 minutes, 20 seconds. In doing so he knocked 10 minutes off his previous best time and 1 minute 26 seconds off Dave Hayward's former record. Dave himself finished in 2 hours, 56 minutes, 26 seconds. Dave has recently added to his tally of long-distance races with a 48-hour track race (in which he ran disastrously, covering only 131 miles), a 60-mile cross-country race, and two 50-mile cross-country races.

Athletics

Below is a list of placings from our Brigade in the 10-mile Kings Lynn Road race, hosted by Norfolk Fire Brigade on 25 April. The course was a fairly flat, two-lap course and accurately measured to 10 miles.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Time</i>
Alan Lawson	18th	56 min 47 sec
Mike Mullany	68th	64 min 37 sec
Pat Jones	73rd	65 min 22 sec
Bob Lonsdale	83rd	68 min 33 sec
Trevor Evans	89th	68 min 48 sec
Bob Hepden	94th	71 min 45 sec

103 runners finished the course. Eric Ranicar, from GMC, won in 51 minutes, 59 seconds.

Charity relay

On Sunday, 6 May an interstation relay took place in aid of Diabetic Research (Bristol) and the Benevolent Fund.

It started at 6 a.m. with Pat Jones (40 yrs) running from A1 to C1, Mike Mullany C1 to C5, Dave Hayward C5 to B4, Richard Wise B4 to B6, Phil Deane B6 to B7, Trevor Evans (50 yrs) B7 to B1, Alan Lawson B1 to A5, Tony Palmer A5 to A3, Ernie Coghlan A3 to A2, Dicky Green A2 to A1. The course covered approximately 105 miles.

Well done all of the runners, but surely the over 40s are well worthy of a special mention. To me it takes guts and determination to run alone over these distances, and all of the runners did a tremendous job, covering the whole run in 12½ hours.

Golf

England v Scotland at Gleneagles, the first international golf match to be held. Twenty players to represent England, three of whom are Avon men: Reg Thompson, B7, Brian Love, B1 and Alvin Craig, A Div. FP.

I am sure they will do their best, although Alvin, with his Celtic past, will have to be watched (only joking, Alvin).

Fishing

The 1982 National Fishing Championships will be held at the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, Maghull, Merseyside, in July. Teams of four, £8.00 per team entry, £2.00 individuals. Entries to Mr T. Stevenson, 22 Cavendish Drive, Winstanley, Wigan, Lancs.

Trout fly angling in June at Draycote Water, Dunchurch, Nr Rugby. Teams of two required. Bealing Fire Station, Masons Road, Stratford-upon-Avon.

Items of sports equipment for sale to stations, watches or individuals.

Volleyball

Two left at £4.75 each, including VAT (new stock will be priced £5.65). Why not by a volleyball for your own watch?

Shuttlecocks

Some medium-speed (blue) shuttles available at £2.30 for box of six. Fast-speed and new stock £2.60 for six.

Towelling grips for squash and badminton rackets

40 p each.

Squash balls

Yellow dot 55 p each.

Other items of equipment can be obtained. For further details contact Stn.O. Liberty, White Watch, A1 Temple.

Exchange visits

Are you interested in West Germany and the West German Fire Brigade? Fireman Horst Kaesebair, 1 M Riedegrund 9, 3003 Rounenberg 6, West Germany would like to hear from you.

Caravaners

Great Manchester Fire Service, National Rally, Dela Salle College, Hopwood, Middleton, 13-15 August, £6.00 per unit, to Mr H. Newton, 3 Buttermere Avenue, Heywood, Lancs. OL10 2BH.

Nottingham Fire Brigade, Lady Margret Hall, Welbeck Workshop, 25-27 June, £4.50 per unit, to Mr W. White, 45 Bescas Lane, Ollerton Newark, Notts.

Ski club

Is there anyone interested in forming a ski club (snow type) with a view to a ski holiday in 1983?

Tuition with equipment hire is available at the Gloucester Ski Centre for £3.00 per hour. Group tuition is cheaper. Interested? Then contact Sandy Stewart, Brigade Control, or Bob Poots, Blue Watch, A1 Temple.

£800 jog

A cheque for £800 was presented to Bristol Maternity Hospital Premature Baby Unit by the Chief Fire Officer, Mr Ponsford, and received on behalf of the hospital by Geraldine Martin, the hospital administrator. The cheque will help to buy a special blood pump and its ancillary equipment, valued at over £1,000. The money was raised by the sponsored jog around the headquarters on Boxing Day. This is becoming an established annual event,



Mike Parker being shown the blood pump by Geraldine Martin.

with Mike Parker, A3, again putting in a lot of work with the organisation involved. The Benevolent Fund and Sports Association also benefit from the events.

Fund-raising activities

Get those beds ready for the Clevedon Bedpush on Sunday, 5 September. Let us see more teams from around the Brigade this year. Was there one from B Division last year? So let's see the fastest station, or is A Division F.P. going to win again? For further information contact Fm E. Pimm, C2 Clevedon.

London Brigade Motorcycle Club

This club was formed in 1978 and since then there have been many enquiries about membership from personnel of other Brigades which we have regretfully declined, suggesting that enquirers start their own Brigade club. However, we realise that this is not easy and so we have decided to invite your motorcycling personnel to join our club as associate members. Depending on the responses from the various Brigades it may prove possible to encourage and support a local autonomy. Thus our aim is not to swell our own membership, but ultimately to form a National Brigades MC to encourage fellowship and responsible ownership.

The club has now reached the stage when it is more expensive for our motorcyclists not to be members and so distance from London should not be a barrier to getting value for money. A monthly magazine is available free if the member pays for postage, but it may prove possible to organise local distribution later if a local representative from other Brigades can be found.

Are you interested? Then contact Hugh J. Davis, Arvon Road, London N51PS (Public Relations).

The following was received from the Lancashire County Fire Brigade Sports & Athletics Association

Globetrotters section

Winter holiday

Since our 'Globetrotters Section' was formed, we have organised visits to New York, Washington and Florida in the USA, Moscow, Malta, Rome, Athens, Istanbul, Paris, Munich, Berlin, Amsterdam and several other cities in Europe. On each occasion we have arranged meetings with our foreign counterparts in the emergency services, and the tales of

interesting experiences in such places as diverse as the Kremlin in Moscow and the Kennedy Space Centre at Cape Canaveral are legion.

Our parties usually number 50-70 members and friends, and with these numbers we can obtain very attractive rates, generally well below the cost of similar arrangements for ordinary travellers. The forthcoming winter holiday will be our fifth ski holiday, all of which have been very successful. We have visited the French Alps and the Italian Dolomites and look forward to our first 'ski' in Switzerland.

The ages of our parties range from 1 to 73 and we can boast at least two marriages, both between policewomen and firemen (but we don't charge for this service or guarantee its success).

We have recently returned from Panarota in Italy, where our party of 75 consisted of members from Merseyside, London, Norfolk, Sussex, Swansea, West Midlands and Derbyshire. The skiing was magnificent and in such scenic surroundings our non-skiing members enjoyed sunbathing for several hours daily and all members enjoyed the 'après ski' activities which included a fancy-dress competition, toboggan racing and a domino knockout.

We would be pleased to supply further details either by letter or phone.

J. Hogan, tel. Preston 795777

Next time

On 13 January we will fly from Manchester at 3.30 p.m. (yes, in the afternoon) to Geneva, and from there we will 'bus' our way to the typically Swiss village of Ovronnaz. The village and its facilities are described fully in a separate leaflet (available on request).

Our flight will be by Britannia Airways (Thompson Holiday Airline) and full meals will be served in-flight in both directions. Transport from East Lancashire and Swansea is included in the price and we are confident that, subject to filling our quota of 25 places, we can arrange to fly our Welsh contingent from Cardiff at 3.00 p.m. on the same day and meet up with them in Geneva. But sadly our southern friends will have to commute either to Wales or to God's country. We can, of course, provide B & B on the night prior to departure, if that helps.

The advantages of this arrangement over our previous holidays are listed below, as are the disadvantages, and we would ask you to compare them before coming to a conclusion as to value for money.

The advantages, as we see them, are:

1. Coach to airport in UK is included.
2. Britannia Airlines with all day-time flights.
3. Full meals in-flight both ways.
4. Swiss (French-speaking) resort at high level, reducing the risk of another 1981 with a lack of snow (Ovronnaz 4500-8130 feet).
5. Ski passes at two-thirds normal price (they are very expensive in Switzerland).
6. Up-market accommodation.

The disadvantages:

1. Due to general reduction in ski holiday places we may not be able to accommodate everyone, therefore we must work on 'first come, first served' basis.
2. Our organisers have lost the good relationship built up over several years with our previous tour company. We are back to square one, and our new company, although well recommended, is as yet untried.
3. The most important disadvantage is that the price is up to £198.50 for juveniles and £208.50 for adults.

Our enquiries to our old company produced a quote for Italy of £213.00, flying from Newcastle in the evening. We think we have produced a good deal. You will let us know if we are right by booking.

PUZZLE CORNER

1. Who or what is St. Elmo's Fire?
2. What is a Firestep?
3. How did the term Firewater originate?
4. Who was known as the Water Poet?
5. Who or what is St. Anthony's Fire?
6. What should not weigh more than 7st 8lb?
7. What is a more common name for a Waterflag?
8. Who or what are: Dexter Chief, Middle Chief, Sinister Chief?
9. Which has the greater atomic weight Osmium or Tungsten and what is that weight?
10. What is the village South of Brussels called and what happened there on 18 June 1815?

The person with the nearest correct answers will receive a record or book token. Please state your preference.

Answers should be addressed to Avon & London Publishing Ltd., 2 Princes Street, Bath, Avon BA1 1HL. Mark your envelope AFM Competition in the top left hand corner and post to arrive not later than first post Tuesday, 6 July. Winner will be announced in the August issue.

The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth... ---

Whilst it is not my intention to write an autobiography, it is essential that a personal note will now and then creep in, for which I hope I shall be forgiven. Also I hope that any reference made to any person will be accepted in the right spirit.

Again, one must get into the atmosphere when recording reminiscences, bearing in mind that we are looking back, a hell of a long way back, searching for amusement, at the same time welding together a set of circumstances that has developed comradeship and is the reason for our forming an association which brings us together at least twice a year, thus enabling us to remember that we have all played a rather important part in the formation of one of the best Fire Brigades in the country, and in Britain's hour of need provided a substantial amount of officer material for the National Fire Service and—later on—the new Fire Brigades.

As I see it, our original Bristol Police Fire Brigade had three phases: the old Brigade under Supt. Gotts, the continuous system under Supt. Fred Cade, and then Supt. Winteringham and Supt. Maunder.

Of the first phase I know little, except that I came into the Brigade in 1922 when the change-over from horses to mechanical vehicles was almost complete, and of course I had to live and work with all the 'old school' as well as the 'new school' under Fred Cade. Most of us who had seen military and naval service abroad had returned to this country to a land 'fit for heroes to live in', but after 18 months of civilian life had been properly disillusioned and had suffered months of depression and unemployment. Now, by virtue of a new policy designed by Fred Cade (to introduce into the Fire Brigade tradesmen who were employed as engineers, coach painters, carpenters and general handymen while awaiting calls of fire), we found ourselves policemen acting as firemen in the Bristol Police Constabulary, serving on a soul-destroying system of continuous duty, but with a reasonable salary of £310s. a week, rising to £410s. plus various allowances, and above all a pension of two-thirds of our salary—if we survived 30 years.

Now one has also to get the atmosphere of the time and of the type of building one had to live in. One cannot do better than to remember it was roughly at the end of the Victorian era, with the old gas-lit streets, paved with cobblestones, and the building was the old town prison, or gaol, known as the Bridewell, a stone-built prison with underground cells, entrances under stone arches with massive great green doors, always closed, with small wicket gates inserted, and the men and families living over and around in 'houses'—half-

boarded-up windows and sanitary conditions generally bad. To make way for married firemen, people had been turned out of quarters which had been used to house organ-grinders with monkeys and also the type of person who used to eke out a living with performing bears in Old Market and Castle Street. A fire bell was installed and, as Charlie Marsh and Harold Hunt will bear out, men and women started to make these hovels their homes. Right opposite the green doors in Silver Street lived Inspector Hyett and Sgt. Wilkins, also Firemen Weeks, Hooper and Pincott. They will tell of the difficulties of bringing up a respectable family.

Now let us proceed into the prison itself and pass the window where a couple of labourers are waiting at the window for tickets to enable them to obtain a night's sleep at Eastville or Fishponds Workhouse. At the appointed time either the inspector, Sgt. Wilkins, or 'Pony' Moore will hand out these tickets. We enter this office through a wicket gate and find the administrative department of the Fire Brigade. I expect it will be 'Pony' Moore who will welcome us. This is the person to stick to, as he knows everyone and everything. Easily recognised, as he always carries a piece of paper, he is the general factotum or handrag of everyone. His qualifications? He is the only one whose handwriting is legible.

As we cross the yard to the stone stairs in the corner leading to the three-storied building, we see a brass pole which we guess to be the sliding pole from the mess rooms and bedrooms of the single men, and it is from these quarters that most of our tales originate.

The large room at the top of the stairs house the 12 single men of the Brigade. We enter and we see 12 single beds complete, all in line, with neat counterpanes, etc., a large wooden box at the foot of each bed and a 'member's mug' underneath each bed. Along the side walls are 12 wooden chests of drawers. There's a brass sliding pole in the centre of one side of the room with a foot-operated trap door and a dim, naked flame gas jet over same, kept burning day and night at a 'certain height'.

At the end of the dormitory is the wash-house with a large bath (capable of holding three at a time), a boot hole and an outsize ash bin. An adjoining room is the single men's rest room and billiards room.

Back down in the yard we find the stables, with the horse-master living above (Sgt. Rees), and a small room adjoining known as the harness room. This is a mysterious place and only certain people are allowed in. I suspect it is something to do with MI5 or Scotland Yard, although we are told it is

solely for the use of 12-hour men who do float duty. It is from here that Arthur Leek, John Crossman and Jimmy Sanders move in and out, always in civvies, vanish for hours and, as far as we can see, never do any work and appear to be well in.

Moving across to the engine house, we pass to the workshops. Now this is the place which appears to be the cause of a lot of disruption as the men employed there are the 'cream', special entries, and sometimes referred to as the untouchables. Inside you will find a delightful chappie in the corner who is a real 'chippy chap', Arthur Bradley by name and an expert wood carver. In the middle of the shop is a small treadle lathe operated by another delightful male known as Len Hobbs. Whatever you do, don't touch the machine, as he keeps a $\frac{5}{8} \times \frac{1}{2}$ inch spanner always handy and has been known to use it. Over by the bench will be found two mechanics. One is Bert Maunder, the first engine driver and senior mechanic, and the other a young, full-red-faced boy, good-looking (and knows it), with a roar instead of a laugh. He is also a bit of a mechanic and nicknamed 'Mutt' Holman. Over in the corner is a fellow who knows all about electricity and operates a blow-pipe from an oxygen cylinder. He is new here and, as such, is thought to be a bighead known as Jock Humphrys.

Out to the rear we have the blacksmith's shop with Fireman Charles Marsh (educated at Eton) in charge, aided and abetted by a striker known as 'Topper' Brown. Both have been known to work, but not very often, and they have a big advantage over everybody else as it is quite a long walk to the forge and Wilkie cannot get there unnoticed.

Back on the other side of the yard we have the paint shop where Percy Fitzjames and 'Soldier' Jones operate behind closed doors. What goes on in there we shall never know.

The rest of the gang operate in the engine house under the skilful guidance of Sgt. Wilkins, later joined by Sgt. E. Smith.

Of course at this stage I was a recruit, but not the latest, as I joined a day before Percy Fitzjames. This seniority of mine caused underlying hatred from Percy as he had to do all the menial tasks until three years later, when Gillie Cains joined us. One of Percy's jobs was to collect the *Evening Times* and *Evening News* at 4.30 from the newspaper offices and, much to his disquiet, place one of each under the officers' doors. This onerous duty was particularly hard to Percy, apart from the indignity. When we had a lie-in of an afternoon, after being out all night, we often observed Percy sneaking around the corner to buy eight copies from the man on the corner. When Percy was sick or on leave I

had to do this little chore and I remember one Saturday I put on a collar and tie and my favourite mackintosh and trilby hat and was on my way to the paper office in St. Stephens Street when I observed a large crowd around the office. I pushed my way through and all of a sudden I was accosted by some fellow about six feet six inches tall demanding £5, stating that 'I was Lobby Ludd'. I denied this but the rest of the crowd took it up and I was roughly handled. I took the tall fellow inside and after some argument managed to convince him that I was not the Lobby Ludd who was giving away £5 to anyone who recognised him from the photo in the paper. When I looked at the photo afterwards I'm damned if I wasn't like him, trilby, mackintosh and all.

As single men we all lived, ate, worked and played together, existing on the continuous system, and of course a lot of things happened. In the bedroom were 'Pony' Moore, Jock Humphrys, Percy Fitzjames, 'Mutt' Holman, Harold Hunt, Len Hobbs, Paul Bush, Bob Packer, 'Aggie' Webber, Bill Hooper, Jimmy Bowden and Gilbert Caines. Each had his own peculiar habits, etc., and of course there had to be 'golden rules'. One of these was lights out and silence after 10 p.m. This didn't affect many of us really, but in deference to the wishes of some this rule was strictly observed and caused a lot of amusement. Now some people go to bed to die, and no noise or anything will wake them, but Len Hobbs was one of the other kind. The least tinkle, sneeze or cough, Len was up and into his boots and I am afraid we played poor Len up a bit over this. But he was a good watchdog for us and many's the time he heard the first 'ding' of the old Gamewell ringing out and was able to give us all the call, nearly enabling us to beat old Fred Cade on the night call.

'Mutt' Holman was a nuisance to this golden rule and particularly annoying to Len Hobbs. Godfrey was courting strong and used to emerge at 5 p.m. on evening leave absolutely faultless with tie pin, gold watch, signet ring, Homburg, walking stick or umbrella, Key ring, loose change, wallet, the lot'. We didn't mind this, in fact we liked to see Godfrey showing the poor married 'scrubs' that we had substance in the single-men's quarters. The trouble was that when he came back at 11 p.m. the only light allowed was the naked gas jet (very low, specially for Bob Packer's benefit—he was liable to go anywhere when asleep) and Godfrey would creep in, fall over everything and titter. By this time everyone was awake and listening. Out came the bunch of keys, every drawer in his chest was unlocked, and there was a special box for every-

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thing. We could hear Len Hobbs breathing heavily so we all waited for it. Out it came, full of venom from Len and a retort, equally venomous, from Godfrey and more tinkling. Sometimes we accompanied 'Mutt' by reaching under our beds and tapping with our thumbnails on the sides of the chambers.

Bob Packer was also a nuisance, as he usually returned off day leave about midnight with a 'load on'. He did try to be quiet but usually fell over everything, got bad tempered and then tried to turn up the gas jet. He would try several times to find the tap but never succeeded and with muffled oaths he would chuck his stuff everywhere and fall into bed.

We all tried our best to creep in, but most failed, and poor Len Hobbs had to be resigned to no sleep until all the beds were occupied.

Of course over a period of years most of us fell for the love stakes, and although we were not entitled to marry under four years' service and had to get the permission of the Chief Constable, we attempted to console ourselves with courting. Our leave days were only about one day in eight on long 'daps' and one in four on short 'daps', with a weekly evening leave of six hours. Fred Cade was very understanding, however, and allowed us to parade within earshot of the bells up and down Silver Street, usually on a Sunday evening, and we used to take it in turns to use the various vantage points where a couple could rest on a spiked railing, for instance, or the laundry doorway where one could get into a clinch in the semi-darkness.

Of course we were all trying to save money for 'the day', and it brings to mind a little incident in which I was involved. My time for the big event was getting near, and being very careful at the time I had invested my savings in the Post Office Savings Bank in Broadmead. My fiancée and I had decided on a special bedroom suite in a shop in town, and we agreed to buy it when I was on evening leave. I decided to seek permission of Sgt. Wilkins to draw the money (about £30) during the lunch hour and having done so took it up to my chest of drawers and safely locked it away. 'Pony' Moore and 'Titch' Hatcliffe decided to give me a scare, so about 4 p.m., while I was at tea in the mess room, the large ash bin was taken into the bedroom, stuffed with brown paper and set alight. When a good old 'fug' of smoke had been created someone shouted in the yard: "The single men's bedroom is on fire". I looked up and saw the smoke, tore up the stairs through the blinding smoke, rushed to my chest and rescued my £30. I tried to find the seat of the fire (this, of course, had been removed and damped down) but found

'Pony' Moore fast asleep (apparently) on his bed with his pipe in his mouth. I shook him and tried to get some sense out of him, but he acted dumb, and then I realised it was all a joke.

Harold Hunt was also a very precise type of individual and a creature of habits. One habit was to brew a concoction to be taken the last thing while in bed. One night, after Harold had left his brew on his chair, he repaired to the 'boot hole' to clean his teeth, etc. The lights were out and while he was away someone removed the basin of broth and replaced it with a chamber half full from under the bed. Harold came in and we waited in the dark. Up went a howl from Harold, but we never did know if he took a good gulp or not as it was too dark.

Quite a number of incidents occurred in the billiards room or rest room and most evenings were spent with the 'broads' (52 of 'em), the favourite game being Nap. We were often joined by members of the C.I.D. Department, Reg Yandell of the Waterworks, and now and again one of the married men would find some excuse to visit us.

It was while waiting for the school to be made up one Saturday evening that Percy Fitzjames, the 'intelligent' one, was reading a copy of the *Green 'Un* and taking up a large portion of the fire space. All was quiet, the few chairs being occupied by sleeping or dozing individuals. One person, not sleepy and looking for excitement, struck a match and applied same to the *Green 'Un*. Before you could say 'Jack Robinson', the whole paper was in flames and it was then discovered that Percy also was asleep behind the paper. I believe Bob Packer knew something about this.

Jimmy Bowden often caused a lot of laughs and he used to do some peculiar things. At one period we all had a craving for motorcycles and one or two were actual owners. Len Hobbs had rather a smart Royal Enfield two-stroke, and Jimmy Bowden felt that there must be other joys in the world besides beer, so he got together with Len Hobbs, bought a small two-stroke also, and Len agreed to teach him to ride it. They used to meet at certain places well out of town, and Len would put Jimmy through his paces. When he was able to keep on the machine and Len felt he was able to go straight, Len would ride side by side on his own machine and advise Jimmy on the delicate art. One day they were riding along, side by side, when suddenly Jimmy crashed into Len and both finished up in a heap amidst the wreckage. Len called Jimmy a 'crimson' fool and asked what he was doing at the time. Jimmy admitted that he had noticed Len bend down from time to time and touch something, with the result

that the bike would shoot ahead. Jimmy had decided to try this, but instead of tickling the carburettor he had put his finger on the sparking plug, hence the pile-up.

Percy Fitzjames was always in trouble and I remember an occasion when the annual meeting of our Social Fund was held in the office and we all sat around on the lockers. It was the event of the year, when the Superintendent took the chair and plans were made for the adults' and children's Christmas parties. There was a fund to which we all contributed about 2d. a week and we relied a lot on the insurance companies to give us a fiver or so for good work done during the year. It was quite a ceremony, starting with the secretary (Sgt. Wilkins) reading the minutes. Now Wilkie couldn't write, so 'Pony' Moore used to write the minutes for him, and as Wilkie had a job to read as well, one can imagine the comments and asides whilst that was going on. Now Percy was a well-meaning fellow and often said what he thought, but that doesn't always pay. Anyhow, he rose to his feet and suggested it was wrong to spend all this money on the 'dear little children' and what were the single men getting out of it? Of course Percy was hung, drawn and quartered, but give the lad his due, he stuck to his guns and it was agreed that £5 should be donated to the single men's quarters. It was decided to spend this on gramophone records and Percy was nominated to buy them. Now Percy was an intellectual and had a keen desire to raise the culture of the single men, and he did know something of music. Back he came with a pile of records and needles and we all sat down to listen. The first was a screeching soprano singing 'Love's Cigarette', followed by a piano concerto in B Flat Minor, etc. Of course you can imagine the comments, and when it was seen that Percy was hurt (which was fatal) the lads plagued his life for weeks after. Needless to say, the records were only used on special occasions, as when Jimmy Bowden used to come in with a 'load on' at midnight. He would play the whole lot through, back and front, with the ignition fully advanced, doing about 150 revs to the minute, change the needle with each side, throw the needles over his shoulder and dance around in his socks. He could never understand why, from time to time, he used to give a piercing yell as he trod on a needle.