

JUNE  
(Vol. 2. No. 6)

# THE JET



OFFICIAL JOURNAL  
of THE NATIONAL FIRE SERVICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION



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# THE JET

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF

## The National Fire Service Officers' Association

Vol. II No. 6

JUNE 1945

4 Redland Court Road,  
Redland, Bristol 6.

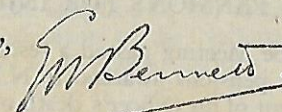
It is with regret that I have to announce that Mr. A. E. Kay has been forced to resign his post as Editor by reason of his leaving the Service to resume civilian life. Members of the Association will be sorry to lose a live personality to whose credit the popularity which the Journal has undoubtedly attained is due in no small measure. Thank you, Mr. Kay, on behalf of your readers, and best of luck in the future.

As Sub Editor of "The Jet" since its inception as the magazine of the Bristol A.F.S., I have been asked by the National Council to carry on where the late Editor left off, and it is my sincere hope that the progressive policy of the Association will continue to be expressed through the medium of this Journal. Its success as an open forum for the opinions of members can only be achieved through the high quality and variety of material submitted, and it is hoped that the Editorial Board will continue to subscribe articles and news items on all subjects which will interest members of the N.F.S.O.A.

It is unfortunate that this month "The Jet" has been reduced in size on account of paper restriction, and for this reason it is not expected that future issues will exceed 32 pages. Regional Correspondents please note that a bi-monthly publication date has been fixed for the first day of each alternate month, and that in future all contributions should be sent to the above address in good time for consideration.

Victory in Europe. To the Fire Service these words mean the cessation of enemy air attack on this country, whether by incendiary, high explosive, shell, rocket or flying bomb. A brilliant chapter has been written in the history of the British Fire Service, which through five years of battle against the blitz has gradually become the accepted National Fire Service—a new Service of which everyone should be justly proud. With the tradition, experience and bravery of those war years unforgotten, it is to be hoped that the Fire Service of this country will continue to raise its head as a national, unified public service that will ably play its part in the vital days of reconstruction which lie ahead.

Yours sincerely,



Editor



# A GREAT DAY

## MAJOR POLICY ISSUES DECIDED IN LONDON

More than 200 members assembled on Tuesday, 10th April, 1945, at the Connaught Rooms, Kingsway, London for the fourth Annual General Meeting. The Chair was taken by the President, Commander Sir Aylmer Firebrace, C.B.E., M.I. Fire E., R.N. (Retd.), and he was supported on the platform by Mr. A. E. Kay, Chairman of the Council, Mr. F. W. Delve, Vice-President, Mr. N. Porter, Honorary Treasurer and Mr. Reader Harris, General Secretary.

The President thanked the Officers of the Association for their hard work during another year, making reference to the Chairman of the Council, the Hon. Treasurer, the General Secretary and, finally, Mr. Wood Roberts, who was retiring from the office of Hon. Solicitor which he had held since the inception of the Association and whose advice had been particularly valuable. The President also thanked the following Committee Chairmen for their work during the past year :—

Mr. A. Netherwood (Conditions of Service Committee)

Mr. S. E. Squires (General Purposes Committee)

Mr. A. A. I. Galloway (Post-War Fire Service Committee)

Mr. J. K. Butler, M.B.E. (Budget Committee)

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

The Annual Report of the Council for the year 1944 (circulated to members before the meeting) was the longest yet published, extending to 8 printed pages and containing 18 paragraphs and 2 appendices.

The volume of work and variety of matters dealt with by the Council during the year were further reflected in the 12 motions and amendments appearing on the agenda paper in connection with the report.

The Chairman of the Council, seconded by Mr. Delve, formally moved its adoption and interesting discussions ensued.

## PART-TIME OFFICERS

Professor W. E. Whitehouse regretted the omission from the report of any reference affecting part-time officers, but his Motion was withdrawn on the understanding that the principle raised was noted by the National Council and would be dealt with by that body in due course.

## PENSIONS FOR INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS

The Meeting passed a resolution expressing the opinion that the present pensions awarded to N.F.S. Officers and their dependants in the event of an Officer's death or discharge due to injuries or medical

## A Great Day

grounds, either directly attributable or aggravated by Service duties, were inadequate. The National Council was instructed to make further representations to the Department with a view to securing for N.F.S. Officers and their dependants pensions comparable with those awarded to Officers of H.M. Forces and their dependants.

## PENSIONS AND NATIONAL INSURANCE (BEVERIDGE REPORT) PROPOSALS

A Motion arising out of the Council's Report on action taken to preserve the existing pension rights of members when the Government's White Paper on National Insurance was implemented was *withdrawn* after discussion. The National Council was asked to ensure the provision of a unified pension scheme without adversely affecting the existing pension rights of any ex-regular fireman.

## GRATUITIES OR ADDED YEARS FOR PENSION PURPOSES?

The printed Report of the Council indicated that they had pressed for information on this question, and towards the end of the year under review (1944) they responded to an invitation by the Department to submit proposals and suggested that at the end of the war all Officers should receive one month's pay for each completed year of service.

During the interval between the end of the period covered by the report and the date of the Meeting, details of the scheme had been published; the Council, regretting the exclusion of ex-regular Officers, had asked Regional Branches to consider the possibility of enlisting the support of local M.P.'s to secure the reversal of this decision.

During the debate on this vital question many members pointed out that Gratuities were expressed to be designed to facilitate rehabilitation in civilian life (as distinct from "Deferred Pay"), and that the additional burden and strain sustained by ex-regular Officers could be recognized and acknowledged by the grant of added years of approved service for pension purposes.

The following resolution was eventually carried by an overwhelming majority, viz :—

"That in view of the exclusion of ex-regular firemen from payments of war gratuities, the Association urges the Department to take steps to ensure that each year of war service shall be counted as two years for superannuation purposes; further, that such a concession shall apply to members, who, non-professional pre-war, desire to remain and are accepted as permanent members of the Post-War Fire Service."

Before being put to the vote, the Chairman of the Council asked that it should be made clear that the adoption of the motion would supersede and cancel the previous decision of the National Council to press for the payment of gratuities to ex-regular Officers.



## THE ASSOCIATION'S JOURNAL

On the subject of the Association's Journal the Council referred in detail to the negotiations in connection with the acquisition of *The Jet*, and various legal, administrative and editorial problems. The meeting generally agreed that the results were gratifying and it is to be hoped that the Editor's appeal for continued support and contributions in the form of articles, letters, news and illustrations has been echoed throughout the country.

Fears that the Journal might suffer owing to the limitation of expenditure were expressed in motions advocating the inclusion of revenue-producing advertisements. Several members, including the Editor, spoke against the adoption of this course, and on a straight vote the meeting resolved that advertisements should be excluded.

A cordial vote of thanks was passed to the Editor, the Editorial Board and Regional Correspondents for the excellent work carried out in the production of the Journal.

## THE POST-WAR FIRE SERVICE

Mr. Mackenzie, in a lively speech, explained the steps taken to ascertain the views of members and Branches and to formulate the final statement of policy on the future structure of the Service, which had now been submitted to the Minister. He also referred to the speech made by the Minister at the Luncheon that morning, when he had promised to consult the Association on the final proposals.

After Mr. Whitehouse had reminded the meeting that part-time Officers would play an important part in the Post-War Fire Service, that part of the Report dealing with the matter was separately voted on and unanimously approved.

The gratitude of the Association was recorded for the painstaking work carried out by Mr. A. A. I. Galloway and other members of the Post-War Fire Service Committee in the preparation of the Association's proposals.

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS 1945/6

The following Officers were unanimously elected :—

*President* : Commander Sir Aylmer Firebrace, C.B.E.,  
M.I. Fire E., R.N. (Retd.).

*Hon. Treasurer* : Mr. N. Porter, A.C.I.S.

*Hon. Solicitor* : Mr. J. Rees-Jones.

The announcement of the ballot for the Vice-Presidencies and the representative of women members was deferred for a further ten days so that time would be given for the return of outstanding ballot papers, delays having been caused by the printing and postal deliveries during Easter.

## REVISION OF RULES

The Association's Rules came under careful scrutiny as well as some criticism, and as a result of various Motions put forward by the National Council and Regional Branches the following amendments were effected :—

- (a) The representation of Regional Branches on the National Council was reduced to one representative (instead of two).
- (b) The representation of women members on the National Council was reduced from four to two members.
- (c) Provision was made for the co-option of two representatives of Associate Members on the National Council.
- (d) The General Secretary will be a member of the Council, provided he is eligible for membership in the normal way or elected to membership as an Associate or Honorary member.
- (e) The Rule providing for the return to Regional Branches of a fixed proportion of subscriptions (25%) was altered to enable the Council to reimburse the actual expenditure of Regional Branches up to a maximum of 12½% of subscriptions collected.
- (f) The annual subscription for Associate Members was reduced to 10s. 6d.

It was also decided that the Council should consider and, if necessary, take steps to secure further alterations to enable a proper procedure to be carried out in the distribution of the Annual Report, Ballot Papers, Agendas, etc. during the ensuing year.

## OTHER MOTIONS

A number of Motions were then submitted by Regional Branches, and those which were carried concerned the following subjects :—

- (a) A protest at the inadequate time allowed by the Fire Service Department for consideration by the Association of matters vitally affecting the conditions of service, with a demand that, in future, sufficient time should be given for full discussion thereon at all levels of the Association.
- (b) An instruction to the National Council to take action to ensure that there should be uniformity of medical standards laid down by the Department throughout the country.
- (c) Steps to be taken whereby those members who had left the Service would retain a lively interest in the Association.

Motions defeated when put to the vote included proposals (i) to reduce the number of Vice-Presidents from two to one; (ii) to reduce the number of co-opted members on the Council from three to one; (iii) to introduce card voting at Council meetings and (iv) to approach Members of Parliament to represent the Association in the House on all matters affecting the Association. In the latter case it was understood that the Council would continue to approach Members of Parliament on selected matters if necessary.

The Meeting closed with a unanimous vote of thanks to the President for his able handling of the Meeting and Chairmanship at the Luncheon.



# THE LUNCHEON

## MISSION PROPOUNDED OVER COFFEE

"IT was the Association's first real party in six years", said the President at the N.F.S.O.A.'s Luncheon on Tuesday, April 10th, 1945—and the members deserved it. For, among other things, their Association had uplifted the status of the Service, helped to foster friendship within and between the ranks, and it had kept a weather eye on conditions of service.

In introducing the Home Secretary, Sir Aylmer said it had been a bold decision on the part of Mr. Morrison to Nationalize the Fire Service. The country might well have been caught on the wrong foot. Officers welcomed the decision in 1941, and now they just as ardently hoped it would never be reversed. Nationalization had made so many things possible, chief among them being that now there was a nicely-proportioned promotion ladder for every fireman. Only by one Service could we retain the best of the ex-A.F.S. officers and attract a good type in the future.

Mr. Morrison rose and confessed that he had never met a body of officers of the N.F.S. without feeling a degree of emotion and pride. Yes, such was his attitude of mind about the N.F.S. that he could not help but feel sentimental, even a little sick, at the thought of it breaking up—"if it ever does."

He wished that he could give definite news, but a feature of democracy was consultation, and whereas he might make fire-watching compulsory overnight because cities were burning around him, circumstances were now less urgent and the mills of the constitution must grind at their accustomed pace. For every fire brigade had always been to a local authority the apple of its eye, the brightest jewel in its crown. The local authorities must therefore be consulted before anything so precious could be taken from them irretrievably. He apologized on behalf of the British Local Government for the time that was being taken over the matter. He had asked for a time limit and the problem would go before Parliament for debate and final decision.

Then the tables heard another confession. "I didn't dream but what it was a war-time measure. I believed it was the natural course of events." He had given a categorical promise of which all the country knew, but the more he saw of the Service the more he wished he had never given that pledge.

It was for the Government to decide finally, and the Government would preserve an open mind until all points of view had been made known. Not least in importance were the views of the men and women of the National Fire Service. He had read and studied the proposals of the Association for the post-war Fire Service, as also those of the Fire Brigades Union, and he assured both bodies that they would be kept informed of developments in the matter.

## The Luncheon

He concluded with something of a panegyric of the Service he had formed, and coined a slogan: "If it's service you're after, National Fire Service is the name". Whether the National Fire Service lived or died, these war years, he said, would form the greatest and most brilliant chapter in the story of fire fighting.

The microphone was then lowered for Miss Ellen Wilkinson, who paid tribute to the women of the Service. "How much we owe to Mrs. Cuthbert and those officers who have seconded her! They have done their part so well, and not in a bossy way".

Miss Wilkinson talked of local authorities and their attitude to Nationalization. She offered some advice. The Association should take aside the heads of local authorities and "put the wind up them about the rates. Tell them what it's going to mean if they get back their private fire brigades." She had tried this stratagem and it had worked.

Mr. A. E. Kay thanked "this admirable pair" for their presence at the luncheon and for their speeches. The "pair" departed, and the Association re-assembled.

T.A.



GIVE ME THE GOOD OLD DAYS!



# Combating the Crash

By "ESAU II"

WE have one thing, at least, in common with our transatlantic cousins—in both countries startling changes and progressive developments are fostered by private enterprise, despite copious establishment figures allocated to miscellaneous "Technical Bureaux" and Research Organizations. Where we appear to differ is that the American will investigate the novelty with an open mind, allow himself to be convinced that it may have a future, then back the producer by placing an order for the novelty of sufficient size to enable production to be commenced on an economic basis and to permit development to continue—all this despite any teething troubles that may not have been fully overcome. The Briton, on the other hand, sees the novelty, realizes the good points (but takes careful note of the disadvantages), then decides to withhold official support until the maker has developed his product a little further.

## An Unorthodox Appliance

Our American Allies have done their full share in endeavouring to develop an unorthodox appliance to fight unorthodox fires; they have produced the CO<sub>2</sub> truck to deal with aeroplane crash fires. At an airfield, somewhere in Britain, I was fortunate enough to be able to see one of these appliances go into action.

The burning Flying Fortress was off the runway, and this latest appliance had no difficulty in proceeding to the scene of the fire at 35 m.p.h. along the hard surface of the perimeter track with its crew of six. Off the macadam surface the ground was good, thick British mud of just the right type to arrest effectively the progress of N.F.S. appliances. The driver of the truck paused on the edge of the hard surface, engaged the drive to the front wheels, put in the low-ratio gears of the auxiliary gearbox (5 seconds for these jobs) and into the mire went the truck. Despite a total weight of about 15 tons, of which 3 tons were liquid carbon dioxide, there was no uncertainty in its progress through the quagmire at a speed of 10-15 m.p.h.

## Fire Fighting in Comfort

In this instance there was no life at stake and the machine was driven almost into the fire. The operator, who was seated comfortably in the cab on the right of the driver, opened the ground-sweep and put the two booms into action without leaving his seat. As he did this, other members of the crew brought manual CO<sub>2</sub> jets into operation on the sides of the fuselage. Two more men appeared with bayonet-type nozzles, pushed them through the metal work of the aircraft and extinguished the pockets of fire which were within the fuselage, and which were now all that remained. I looked at the second hand of my watch and found that half-a-minute had not elapsed since the truck came to rest.

## Combating the Crash

While I was looking at the time, the operator had decided to apply a blanket of foam to prevent re-ignition. Still seated in his cab, he changed the switches and, from the points that had ejected CO<sub>2</sub> gas, there now poured forth copious quantities of foam. The blanket was soon complete—the job had been sealed off. Within 4 minutes the making up had been completed and the truck backed away from the aircraft, through the mud, without any difficulty. Soon it had reached its base near the flying control and had been filled up with a further three tons of refrigerated liquid CO<sub>2</sub> which was waiting in a specially-imported storage tank. Next please!

Was all this just a demonstration? Yes, it was, but it did show that progress has been made, and made effectively.

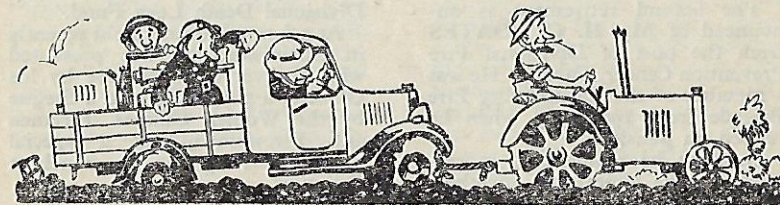
## What a Contrast!

I returned to my station and looked at our "crash tender" with a more critical eye than before. It seemed to have changed whilst I had been away at the demonstration. Now it was just a lorry, a common or garden lorry which could well have been destined to spend its life carrying coal. On it was a tank which held about 500 gallons of water, and mounted on the rear of the tank was the unit off a light trailer pump which had been removed from its chassis. At the sides were fixed two small foam-making branchpipes and a couple of knapsack containers.

## Hitched to a Tractor

I walked around the vehicle and could still just see traces of a bent front bumper and a bright patch on the front axle—those were the only remaining traces of where the tow rope had been tied when a friendly farmer had hitched us on to the back of his tractor, as he pulled us through the three fields which had separated us from the aeroplane that had crashed on his farm! We were grateful to him, as we have been to many more who have rendered the same service when in similar predicaments on other occasions. I looked at the "crash tender" again and thought how well it had been kept, with what care it had been tended, how the paint shone and how well the bell had been polished—the bell that we use on the way to our crash fires, lest anything should delay our progress. The bell that brings the farmers to the scene with their tractors!

Britain owes many debts to her farmers. Will she soon be as indebted to her Technical Experts?





# PERSONALIA

The news that the King had approved the award of the King's Police and Fire Service Medal in the New Year's Honours List to **Mr. W. H. BARRETT** was received with great satisfaction throughout all branches of the Service.

Mr. Barrett served with the Royal Flying Corps during the Great War 1914-1918, and saw service in France, Belgium and Russia. Shortly after the last war he was appointed Principal Fire Officer and Fire Adviser to a large industrial concern in the Midlands, and later was chosen by the Smethwick Corporation to command the town's Fire Brigade. On the Nationalization of the Service he was appointed to the command of No. 13 Fire Force Area (Norfolk and East and West Suffolk), a position which he still holds.

\* \* \* \*

The award in the same Honours List of the M.B.E. to **Miss KATHLEEN BATES** has given considerable pleasure to all ranks in No. 2 Region.

Early in 1939 Miss Bates volunteered for Civil Defence duties, joining the Ambulance Corps in Wakefield as a driver. In June of that year she transferred to the A.F.S., and from September, 1939 to October, 1941 worked as a driver in Wakefield, during which time she was called upon to take reinforcements to Birmingham, Liverpool and Hull during the blitzes. Her duties also included general secretarial work for the Wakefield Fire Brigade. In October 1941 she was appointed R.W.F.O. for No. 2 Region. (See photograph on page 13).

\* \* \* \*

The second retirement is announced of **Mr. H. C. COATES** from the post of Divisional Fire Prevention Officer, Cardiff. He was a member of the Cardiff City Fire Brigade from 1905-1935 when he retired on pension.

In 1937 he volunteered in response to the appeal for members

of the Auxiliary Fire Service, and early in 1938 was appointed a Divisional Officer and undertook a considerable amount of recruit training. He attended all fires of note in the city which occurred during his period of service, notably Cardiff Works Oil Fire in 1911 and a warehouse fire in the same year.

In 1914 he nearly came to an untimely end at a fire at the Bishop's Palace, Llandaff, where a stone staircase collapsed and he was on the injured list for a considerable period. He was also in attendance at Frederick Street, New Street and Dragon Buildings, Cardiff. (See photograph on page 13).

\* \* \* \*

We announce with regret the death of **Mr. C. G. CORKER** of Felixstowe, where he served prior to Nationalization as a Station Officer.

\* \* \* \*

**Mr. S. J. F. DAVIS**, of No. 11 Area ("D" Division) has left the Service after 23 years Fire Brigade work. He had suffered from indifferant health for the past 18 months and has now returned to the family building trade. He became a retained fireman in the Romford Brigade in 1922, and ten years later was appointed Third Officer and Secretary. On the outbreak of the present war he was called up for whole-time duties and helped to train the Romford A.F.S., becoming Chief Officer and Commandant of the Brigade. On Nationalization he was appointed a Divisional Officer and posted to Chelmsford.

For 2 years he was Chairman of the Eastern Regional Branch of the Association and also Chairman of the Eastern District of the National Fire Brigades' Association, and Secretary and Treasurer of the Divisional Death Levy Fund.

At a farewell dinner held recently in Chelmsford he was presented with a silver cigarette case by his Officers, a gold watch and a cheque by the Women Officers, Firemen and Firewomen, and a special presentation by the personnel at Dunmow.

**Mr. S. HARMSTON**, formerly Area Establishments Officer at No. 10 Area, has resumed his interest in a firm of solicitors in Grimsby and reverted to part-time. In A.F.S. days he was a Station Officer in that town and saw service at Liverpool and other similarly-affected areas.

On relinquishing his appointment he was presented with an inscribed gold wristlet watch by his fellow Officers.

\* \* \* \*

**Mr. H. HATCHETT**, formerly Officer-in-charge of the Fareham Division of No. 14 Fire Force, has been transferred to No. 5 Region. He is well known in Portsmouth, where he was an Inspector in the City Police before being seconded to the Fire Department.

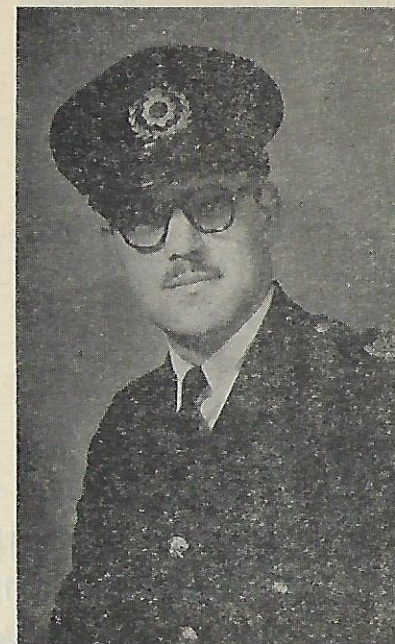
\* \* \* \*

**Mr. H. HICKS, B.E.M.**, of the Portsmouth Sub-Area (Fire Force 14) is retiring on pension on medical grounds. He is well known in the South of England, joining the Portsmouth City Police Fire Brigade in 1919 and being promoted Station Sergeant in 1934.

He played a large part in the operational training of the Auxiliary Fire Service in Portsmouth, and during the blitzes of 1940/41 was awarded the B.E.M. for his courageous handling of fire situations. On Nationalization he was appointed Divisional Officer in Portsmouth, and his many friends, both in the Armed Services and the N.F.S., will wish him the best of luck in his retirement.

\* \* \* \*

**Mr. F. LONG**, Chief Clerk of No. 17 Area, left the Service on the 31st March, 1945, on his return to commercial life, and he has been succeeded by **Mr. F. N. STEINER**, formerly of No. 34 Fire Force. Mr. Steiner, who is a qualified solicitor, joined the Service in January, 1939, as a part time auxiliary fireman, and served on operational duties with the A.F.S. in London. Upon Nationalization he was appointed Divisional Clerk in "E" Division of No. 34 Area.



**Mr. A. E. KAY**, formerly Chief Clerk of the No. 17 (Bristol) Fire Force, has left the Service to take up an administrative appointment with the Essex County Council. He thus returns to local government, in which he had 15 years' service after a break of 3½ years.

Mr. Kay was Chairman of No. 7 Regional Branch 1942/43, and a co-opted member of the National Council of the Association 1943/45 and its Chairman last year. He was responsible for editing *Fire Group* from May-October, 1944 and also for the taking over and publication of the first 5 issues of *The Jet* as the official Journal of the Association.

\* \* \* \*

The New Year's Honours List included the name of **Mr. T. B. ROBERTS**, Staff Column Officer at No. 9 Fire Force Headquarters until December last. Prior to Nationalization he was Deputy Commandant of the Leicester A.F.S., and during the whole of this period he was held in the highest regard by all ranks of the Service.



## Personalia

**Mr. D. G. SAUNDERS**, of No. 5 Region, has been transferred to No. 14 Fire Force and posted to the Isle of Wight. He was formerly attached to London Regional Headquarters.

\* \* \* \*

**Mr. R. F. SYMONS**, who joined the A.F.S. in the early days, has been released from the Service. He served for some time at Plymouth and Bodmin, and was eventually posted to Truro as Communications Officer.

\* \* \* \*

The retirement is announced of **Mr. W. A. TRETHEWEY**, former Chief Officer of Newquay Fire Brigade, with which he served for many years. Upon Nationalization

he was appointed Company Officer, and has served at Newquay, Camborne and Penzance.

\* \* \* \*

Also of **Mr. J. A. TVACK**, who has been in the Fire Service for nearly 20 years and until 1941 was a member of the Truro Fire Brigade. Since Nationalization he has served at Truro and Camborne with the rank of Company Officer.

\* \* \* \*

**Mrs. I. M. YATES**, one of the first Women Officers appointed in No. 19 Area in 1942 and who has served throughout at Falmouth, has been granted release from the Service.

## OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION 1945-1946

### *President*

COMMANDER SIR AYLMER N. G. FIREBRACE, C.B.E.,  
M.I. Fire E., R.N. (Retd.)

### *Vice-Presidents*

F. W. DELVE, Esq., C.B.E., M.I. Fire E. (No. 5 Region)  
A. E. KAY, Esq., F.C.C.S. (No. 7 Region)

### *Chairman of the Council*

F. W. DELVE, Esq., C.B.E., M.I. Fire E. (No. 5 Region)

### *Vice-Chairman of the Council*

A. A. I. GALLOWAY, Esq.

### *Honorary Secretary*

R. READER HARRIS, Esq.,  
2 MILLBANK HOUSE, GREAT PETER STREET, LONDON, S.W.1.

### *Honorary Treasurer*

N. PORTER, Esq., A.C.I.S. (No. 5 Region)

### *Honorary Solicitor*

J. REES-JONES, Esq. (No. 5 Region)

### *Honorary Editor*

G. W. BENNETT, Esq.,  
4 REDLAND COURT ROAD, BRISTOL, 6.



Miss KATHLEEN BATES, M.B.E.



Mr. H. C. COATES



CHILDREN EVACUATED FROM LONDON TO ESCAPE FLYING BOMBS, 1944  
Photo taken with their foster mothers at the Golf House, Bridlington

S.I. Fw. WOOD

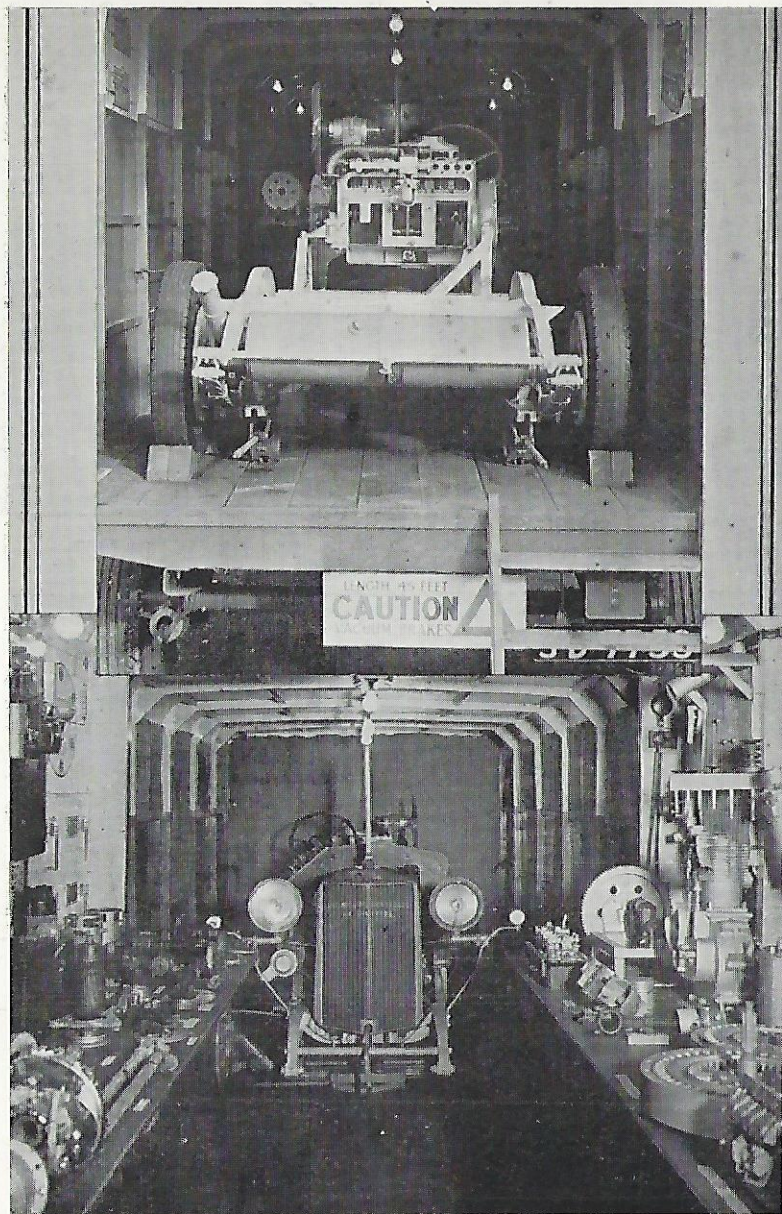
G. O. CLARKSON

L/Fw. CROOKS



## "On Tour" in No. 25 Area

TRAVELLING SCHOOL OF MOTOR MAINTENANCE



Top: COMPLETE CHASSIS STRIPPED FOR DEMONSTRATION PURPOSES

Below: INTERIOR OF THE "CLASSROOM", SHOWING VARIOUS ENGINE COMPONENTS, BRAKING SYSTEMS, ETC.

## MOBILE TRAINING UNIT

NO. 25 AREA'S TRAVELLING SCHOOL OF MOTOR MAINTENANCE

NOW "on tour" in No. 25 Area (Midland Region) is what is claimed by its designers to be the most comprehensive motor maintenance training unit yet produced for service with the N.F.S. (*see illustration opposite*).

### TRAINING ON STATION DOORSTEPS

With the introduction of this latest development of the "travelling school" principle, the scope of the Area instructional staff has been greatly enlarged. Training can now be given literally on Station doorsteps, however isolated they may be, and part-time as well as whole-time personnel are showing considerable interest in the unit wherever it goes. Results so far achieved indicate that it will pay handsome dividends.

### SEEING THE "WORKS"

Within a few minutes of its arrival at a Station, the two sections which comprise the unit can be coupled up to provide a "classroom" measuring some 40 feet long by 7 feet 6 inches wide, wherein are displayed polished specimens of every component of the modern motor vehicle—complete engines (cut away to give a clear view of the "works"), transmission systems, electrical circuits, carburetion and braking systems. How the many parts fit together to form one efficient unit is shown to students by means of a complete chassis, the salient features of which are indicated and explained.

### CARE OF TYRES

Another important section is that devoted to the care of tyres, various types of which are shown in section. The effects of bad driving and inefficient braking systems are clearly demonstrated by means of the exhibits, which enable the instructors to reproduce all the conditions which can give rise to abnormal wear and tear.

Well lighted and thoroughly weatherproof, the unit can be put into use at very short notice in the event of weather or other conditions making it impossible for Station personnel to engage in outdoor activities connected with the normal routine work of the day.

### DAY AND EVENING SESSIONS

Two instructors accompany the unit, which is to operate for a fortnight at each whole-time Station in the Area. Training of whole-time personnel takes place during the day, and there are evening sessions for part-timers.

During his recent visit to Area H.Q., the Deputy Chief of the Fire Staff made a lengthy inspection of the unit, and afterwards congratulated the Area training staff on the results of their efforts.



# SPORTING *Chatter*

By "OLD GUARD"

## Inter-Regional Cup Final

Extra time was necessary to decide the final of the Inter-Regional Football Competition at Rotherham on 29th March, when in a game full of thrills and varying fortunes No. 5 Region defeated No. 2 Region by the odd goal in three. On paper, and especially after their game against No. 10 Region, No. 2 were firm favourites, but from the start the London amateurs fought a determined game against their more experienced professional opponents. At full time the score was one all and during extra time London took the lead, which they held to within five minutes of the end. Then thrill followed thrill. No. 2 were awarded a penalty for hands—a golden opportunity to draw level, but the penalty shot hit the foot of the left-hand post and rebounded into play to be cleared after an exciting tussle.

\* \* \* \*

## Trophy Goes South

And so the cup came South after a period of two seasons in the North, much to the delight of the Londoners. The game was contested in the best spirit and there is no doubt that London were full value for their win. Sir Arthur Dixon, C.B.E., very kindly travelled to Rotherham expressly to present the cup and individual medals, and in a few well-chosen remarks expressed the hope that sport would continue to form an accepted part of the post-war organization.

\* \* \* \*

## Wales Win Rugby International

There were equally as many thrills at Llanelli—only this time in the sister code, rugby. The occasion was the first rugby international between England and Wales, and if the game did not reach the high

standard expected in a representative game, a crowd of over three thousand had the pleasure of seeing Wales triumph by 6 points to nil. There was an impressive moment when, after Sir Arthur Dixon and Sir Aylmer Firebrace had been introduced to the teams by the Mayor of Llanelli, the Fire Service Band played the Welsh and English National Anthems. England were strengthened by the inclusion of Batten, the Bradford Northern and England star, Seeling and Teal, also Northern Union players; but the Welsh backs were resolute and gave them very few opportunities to display their skill. Wales lost no time in settling down, and Daniels gave England an early shock by crossing in the corner during the first five minutes. Daniels, who hails from Llanelli, with Sullivan (Aberavon) formed a thrustful wing, and gave plenty of trouble. England were somewhat lacking in teamwork and, had the forwards concentrated on controlling the scrummages, it is possible that more might have been seen of the backs.

\* \* \* \*

## Contrast in Ages

An interesting contrast was that in age there was a difference of just over 100 years in the teams, the average age of the England team being 35 and that of Wales 32. Reference to this was made by Divisional Officer Burnham, the popular English captain, at the reception which followed. This reception was incidentally given by the Mayor of the town (Councillor D. Hughes), who expressed the pleasure it gave his town, which he described as the home of Welsh rugby, to stage such an important game. He expressed the hope that the visitors would carry away with

them a favourable impression of Welsh hospitality and sportsmanship. Judging by the manner in which both teams fraternized, I have little doubt that the game served its purpose in both these directions. In fact, there was some talk of a return in London at some later date.

\* \* \* \*

## Continental Tour

Rather an interesting piece of news is the fact that there is a possibility of a representative National Fire Service soccer team being permitted to make a short Continental tour in the next few weeks to meet two or three civilian and Service elevens in France and Belgium. As a Service we can certainly put a useful side in the field and can rest assured that they will uphold the traditions of the National Fire Service for hard and clean

## Sporting Chatter

sportsmanship. Here's wishing them good luck!

\* \* \* \*

## Cricket Fixtures

Cricket will very soon be in full swing. Owing to the reduction in personnel it will obviously be on a much-reduced scale, but it is good to know that a National side is to function this year. Already an attractive fixture list has been drawn up with County and Services teams, and there is every likelihood of the N.F.S. again being able to call on a number of well-known professionals.

Amongst the fixtures which have been arranged by Coy. Officer J. M. Webster are matches against Notts on June 30th, Glamorgan (July 28th), Birmingham Cricket Festival (Aug. 6th), whilst provisional dates have been arranged with the West Indies at Old Trafford in July and the National Police.

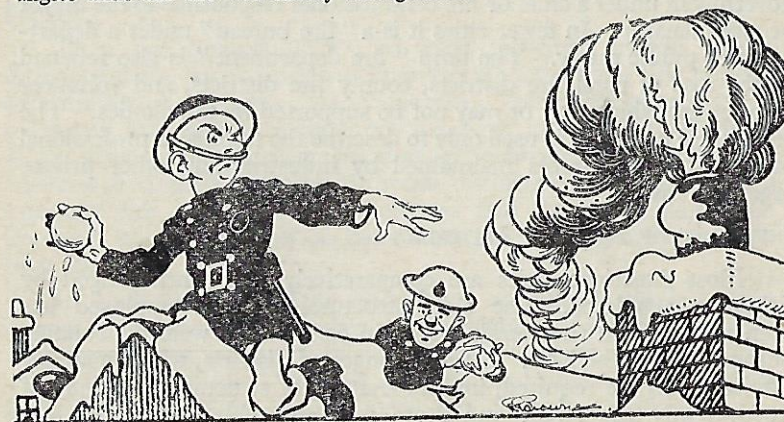
## N.F.S. Factualities, No. 3

### Snowball Extinguishers

Now that the official weather forecast brings once again the habit of carrying raincoats and umbrellas during perfectly fine, sunny days, censorship permits the recording of an episode that occurred during the recent cold spell—somewhere in England.

A crew responded to a chimney fire, travelling over icy roads, but on arrival were unable to tackle the job from within the house. A wholly unsuccessful attempt was made to operate a stirrup pump on the sloping, snow-clad roof—the pump operators narrowly missing broken limbs in the process. The stack still blazed.

"S'no use", said one man. "Snowballs", said the Company Officer, and the entire crew got to work and pelted the blazing chimney from all angles until the fire was finally extinguished.





# THE FIRE SERVICE IN NORTH AMERICA

By WARREN YOUNG KIMBALL

*Supervisor, Fire Record Department, National Fire Protection Association, International, Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A.*

*Editor of VOLUNTEER FIREMAN magazine, which has the largest fire service circulation of any North American fire service publication.*

THERE are some 15,000 Fire Departments on the North American continent, exclusive of Latin America. Of these, approximately 1,000 consist primarily of full-time paid firemen. Some 14,000 organizations are wholly or in part on a part-time basis with paid call men, or volunteer fire fighters who receive no compensation. In general, the full paid fire organizations are found in municipalities of over 10,000 population, of which there are some 1,077 in the United States and 86 in Canada. However, some primarily volunteer fire forces are found in cities up to 100,000 population, although in such cases fire apparatus drivers and a few officers are usually full-time employees.

## NATIONALIZATION UNLIKELY

In the United States and in Canada fire protection is a local function. The United States is made up of 48 self-governing states. The national government has authority only in such matters as national defence, currency and foreign affairs, delegated to it in a written constitution. In all other details of government, such as police, fire protection and education, the states are independent and sovereign. It is not likely that fire protection will become nationalized in the United States.

In most cities the fire force is a "department" of the municipal government under a chief or fire commissioner responsible to the mayor or city manager. In fewer cities it is a "fire bureau" under a department of public safety. The term "fire department" is also retained in the case of rural fire districts, county fire districts, and volunteer associations which may or may not be supported by tax monies. The term "fire brigade" is used only to describe the numerous professional or part-time fire forces maintained by industrial and other private organizations.

## INFLUENCE OF BUILDING MATERIALS

Most American cities are comparatively new when judged by European standards. The chief structural material employed has been timber from the forests which in earlier days were deliberately burned to clear the land. Even in congested districts, where masonry exterior walls are required, interior framing of structures is chiefly of wood. Only the larger and more modern public, industrial and mercantile structures are commonly of fire-resistive construction.

Except in the older eastern seaboard communities, where they have been largely outlawed, wooden shingle roofs, which have been chiefly responsible for many sweeping conflagrations, are still found in considerable numbers.

It is estimated by the National Fire Protection Association that over 668,000 fires caused over 100,000,000 pounds loss in the United States in 1943. Each of the past two years (1943 and 1944) have seen over 100 individual fires with losses exceeding 62,500 pounds. It is not generally appreciated that North American weather conditions play a leading role in the high rate of fire incidence. Long periods of extremely dry weather with temperatures mounting at times to 100° F. are not uncommon in summer. In many communities grass and brush fires are the leading sources of fire calls. At times these calls become so numerous that even the larger departments must detail men and apparatus from high-value districts to outlying areas. Individual grass and brush fires driven out of control by the high winds have destroyed hundreds of buildings. American fire appliances carry special grass and brush fire-fighting equipment.

During the winter temperatures may drop many degrees below zero F. in the northern states and Canada. Heating systems in all buildings must be operated constantly for 7 months or more each year. Fires due to overheated heating equipment are common, and spread rapidly through structures which are thoroughly dried.

## FIRE FIGHTING AND PUBLIC INTEREST

With fire such a major problem in American life, interest in fires is a subject that has a large following. Fires draw large crowds and are reported in detail in the newspapers. Many persons discuss and criticize fire fighting technique, frequently to the disgust of professional firemen.

There are perhaps 75,000 or more full-time firemen chiefly employed in the larger cities, and approximately ten times that number of volunteer or part-time "call" firemen. Individual volunteer fire companies may have as many as 500 members, although only 20 to 40 of the younger members are listed as active firemen in normal times. There is frequently considerable social distinction in belonging to a volunteer fire company. It is reported that the late Franklin D. Roosevelt was a member of his home town fire company at Hyde Park, New York.

In some states, such as New York and Pennsylvania, where firemen's organizations number their members near the quarter-million mark, the firemen wield considerable voting strength in matters related to their welfare. In most cities the paid firemen are organized as local unions of the International Fire Fighters' Association, an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor.



## 2-PLATOON SYSTEM FAVOURED

Most permanent firemen work some variation of the 2-platoon system. In the middle western states, 24-hour shifts on and off duty are preferred. In the eastern departments a few periods of day duty are followed by an equal number of periods of night duty. The complete cycles of day and night duty may vary between 6 and 14 days in different communities. Prior to the war, New York City and a few other fire departments worked a 48-hour week or so-called "3-platoon" (8-hour day). Manpower shortages have forced a temporary reversion to 2 platoons for the duration.

A straight 2-platoon system averages 84 hours a week, but most departments grant days off to reduce the time worked to between 64-72 hours. In many cities no 24-hour shifts are worked, as the men are given a day off after finishing a day tour before reporting for night duty. The firemen on the night shift sleep in dormitories in the stations. Officers are provided with individual suites. Even the smaller stations usually contain well-equipped kitchens, smoking and reading rooms and other facilities for the comfort of the men.

Salaries vary with the size of the city and the relative cost of living in the nearby geographical area. Salaries of first class firemen vary from an unusual low figure of 600 dollars to well over 3,000 dollars a year. In large cities the present average would be approximately 2,500 dollars (4.02 dollars equal £1). Many departments provide a clothing allowance for dress uniforms, and provide rubber boots, rubber or waterproof canvas fire coats, and leather, metal or fibre helmets for fire duty.

## ENGINE COMPANIES AND "PUMPERS"

America does not have large fire stations as found in Europe. The basic American fire unit is the "engine company", usually located in a small neighbourhood fire station. The company consists of 10-20 men under a captain and one or more lieutenants. Four to six company members are on duty to respond with the apparatus, which basically consists of a 750 or 1,000 gallons per minute pumping engine (U.S. gallons equal 0.83 Imperial gallons) carrying 1,000 feet 2½ inch double-jacketed cotton rubber-lined hose, 200 feet 1½ inch c.r.l. hose and 200 feet of ¾- or 1-inch first aid "booster" hose supplied by an 80- to 100-gallon water tank. In high-value districts a separate hose truck with water tank and turret nozzles is commonly provided with the engine companies. In a number of the largest cities fire service mains provide direct fire streams at pressures up to 300 pounds p.s.i. with pressure maintained from central pumping stations, capacities varying between 2,000 to 36,000 G.P.M. Standard mobile fire pumps deliver their capacities at 120 pounds p.s.i., 50 per cent of capacity at 200 pounds, and 33½ per cent at 250 pounds.

## LADDER TRUCKS WITH DOUBLE STEERING

About ⅓ to ½ of the fire stations also house "ladder" or "truck" companies. Ladder trucks usually carry mechanical "aerial" ladders

varying from 65-foot "junior" aerials to 85- and 100-foot ladders. These are equipped with ladder pipes to serve as water towers. The same trucks carry from 230 to 400 feet of manually-raised ladders, the longest of which are usually 50- or 55-foot extension ladders. The larger ladder truck vehicles may be more than 60 feet long and the rear end is controlled by a second steering wheel operated by a "tillerman."

Specialized units, such as rescue or floodlight vans, are usually located at headquarters stations. Companies are grouped in districts or battalions under battalion chiefs, who in turn report to division or deputy chiefs. Initial response to a fire call in high-value districts would be perhaps a dozen appliances from 6 or 8 companies from various stations. Response is in accordance with pre-arranged assignments and is controlled by the central fire alarm office of the city. These "first alarm" forces are commanded by battalion or deputy chief officers, who respond to alarms in their areas in cars equipped with 2-way radio. American cities are covered with numerous fire alarm telegraph boxes for public and fire department use. Printed assignments for response are based upon known hazards in the vicinity of the "box", with heavier response at night when the life hazard is greatest. A high percentage of the calls received prove to be malicious.

## PROMOTION FROM THE RANKS

All American fire officers, both in company and chief grades, must come up through the ranks of their local department. Promotions are based upon competitive written examinations, which are considerably weighted in favour of seniority in the fire service as well as credit for military service. Persons brought in from outside the profession to command local fire organizations inevitably find that promotion from the ranks is an unwritten rule in the American fire service which no person, however competent, can successfully violate. After 25 years service and upon reaching 55 or 60 years of age, firemen, including officers, retire at one-half to three-quarters of their highest annual pay. Generous pensions are also granted for disability and for widows of firemen killed in the performance of duty.

## 1,200 ALARMS ANNUALLY

The average fire department in an American city of 100,000 population would answer about 1,200 alarms in a year, of which 542 would be building fires. The balance would consist of grass, rubbish, automobile and other miscellaneous fires, emergency calls and false alarms.

An average city of 100,000 population would employ between 150 and 200 firemen and officers. These would be organized into an average of 10 engine and 4 ladder companies, divided into 3 or 4 battalions or districts.

In America fire prevention work and the enforcement of municipal fire laws and ordinances is a fire department function carried out by the fire prevention bureau. Except in a few large cities, fire patrol or salvage operations are also a fire department function.



## The Fire Service in North America

### THE AMERICAN EMERGENCY SERVICE

With the passing of air raid threats, American auxiliary fire departments largely have been allowed to lapse, although their personnel is called upon in unusual emergencies. Additional help for meeting exceptional situations is more quickly obtained by means of very elaborate mutual aid arrangements between nearby communities. For example, in the greater Boston area of eastern Massachusetts, some 40 municipal fire departments are interconnected by fire alarm telegraph, thus having several hundred fire companies at their disposal through reciprocal agreements which include printed assignment cards.

In order to make fire fighting "a young man's game", most fire departments plan to absorb many men returning from military service after the war by reducing the hours of work and stimulating the retirement on pension of the older men.

(See illustrations opposite and overleaf)

## NORWAY THANKS THE N.F.S.

"Soon I am going back to my beloved Norway, and I realized that I could not go without telling you how much I appreciate your kindness, hospitality and help.

A special thanks on behalf of my country and myself, to all the officers in N.F.S. administration, from Commander Sir Aylmer Firebrace to the officials in the Home Office, for the help they have given us in training and forming our units and getting together the things we need for our start.

The appreciation and understanding you showed me when I lectured to your College, schools and stations, is something I will never forget in days to come.

My stay in this country has also given me the opportunity to see the magnificent work you did when the blitz was on, and later the flying bombs.

Hundreds of you did not live to see the end of the war and the victory. They died in the fight for Britain, which was also the fight for us.

In my country we may still have the worst to come, although in my home town—Bergen—out of a Fire Force of 150, 14 have been killed and 24 sent to concentration camps in Germany, etc.

So, in a way, we have suffered together as always firemen will do in war.

When, soon, the struggle between civilization and Nazism has finished and the murderers and torturers of millions of men, women and children stand before their judges and have to answer for their crimes, then we can begin to construct a new and better world where barbarism is banned.

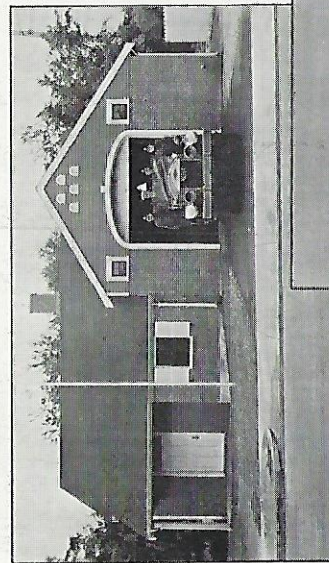
Then you firemen of Great Britain can look proudly back on the part you played in defeating barbarism or Nazism.

Thank you colleagues."

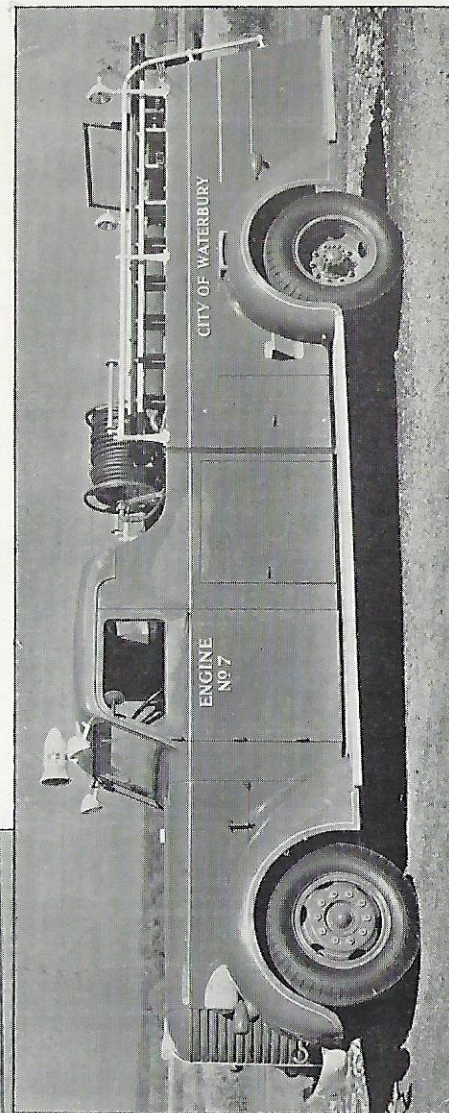
A. ADRIANSEN

Lieut. Norwegian Fire Service

## Over There BUNGALOW FIRE STATION AND 750-GALLON PUMPER



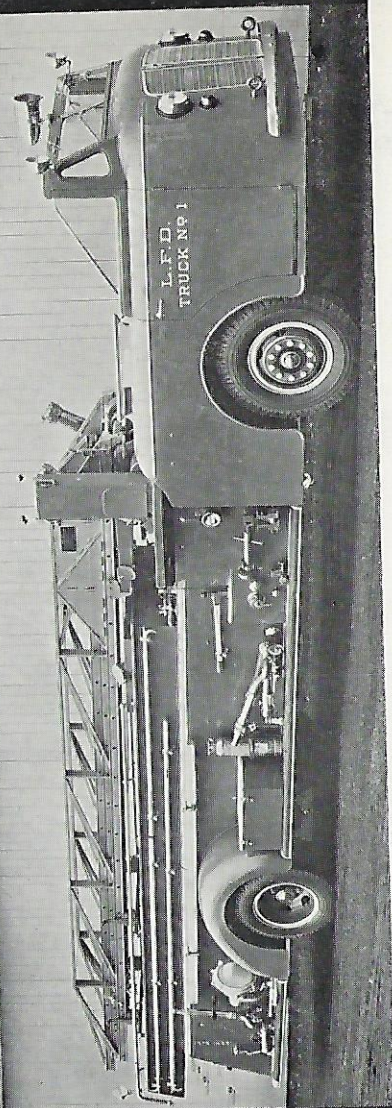
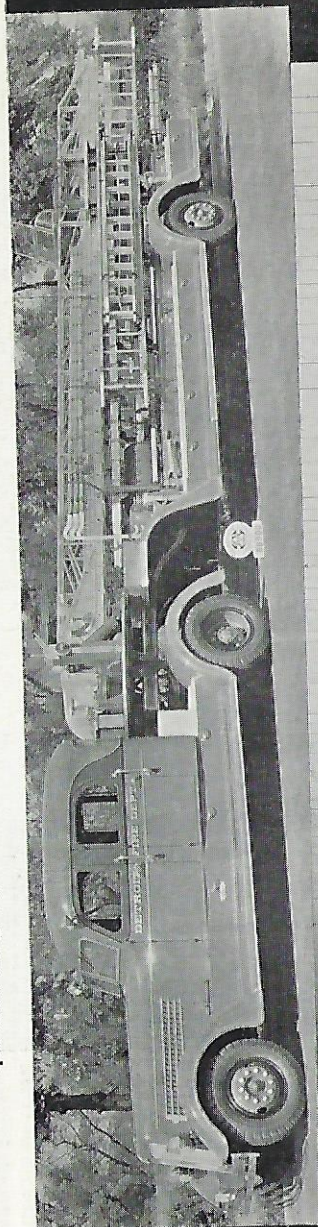
Typical bungalow fire station in a residential district of a city of 80,000 population. The station is equipped with a 750-gallon per minute pumper, one officer and three men on each shift. There are bedroom facilities, attractive kitchen with electric refrigerator, a recreation or "smoking" room, and a watchroom with fire alarm receiving instruments. In the basement is an attractive community hall with a piano and fireplace.



750-gallon pumper with a 3-man cab. Such a machine carries 1,000 ft. or more of 2½-in. hose; 200 ft. of 1½-in. c.r.l. hose; 200 ft. of 1-inch "booster" hose supplied from a 100-gallon water tank on the apparatus. Three or more of such units usually respond to first alarm signals from fire telegraph boxes.



A 100-foot aerial truck, tractor drawn, having a tiller wheel to assist in steering the rear end. The truck packs up to 400 feet of ground and roof ladders, the longest of which is 55 feet in length.



Modern 65-foot "junior" aerial ladder truck carrying approximately 230-foot ground ladders, tools, rescue devices, etc.

# REGION *by Region.*

## NORTH MIDLAND (No. 3) REGION

There was an excellent attendance of members at the Annual Meeting of No. 3 Region, which was held at Leicester on Saturday, 10th March, under the Chairmanship of Mr. C. H. Wilkinson, of No. 10 Area.

During the course of the meeting, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Carter and Mr. Langsdale—all of No. 7 Area—were elected as Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

Resolutions were submitted by Area Councils on the question of gratuities to ex-regular Officers, redundancy of Officers, and the reimbursement of removal and settling in expenses to Officers who, on being discharged, return to their home towns.

Members expressed themselves most forcibly on the fact that Area and Regional Councils had not been consulted in connection with the proposed policy on the redundancy of Officers, and the National Council was asked to impress upon the Department the need for more co-operation when in future they required the Association to express an opinion on similar important matters of policy.

It was also agreed that the Council should be asked to press for the extension of the gratuity awards to ex-regular Officers.

### No. 7 AREA

The Annual Meeting of the No. 7 Area Council was well attended when Mr. Hamer was elected Chairman and Mr. Robinow Secretary. In discussion, members expressed their concern at the decrease of membership in the Area, and it was felt that efforts should be made to maintain the interest of members by arranging for the Executive Committee members to disseminate reports on the work of the National Council.

### No. 10 AREA

No. 10 Area had a large attendance at their Annual Meeting held at Louth, when the Secretary, Mr. Wadsworth, reported that during the past year there had been a slight increase in membership. Mr. C. H. Wilkinson was re-elected Chairman and Mr. Wadsworth Secretary, and the Council expressed their appreciation to both these Officers for their past services.

## SOUTHERN (No. 6) REGION

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Southern Region Branch was held at Basingstoke on Thursday, 15th March. There was a good representative attendance and the opportunity was taken to have a "get together" lunch before the business of the afternoon proceeded. At the afternoon session, Fire Force Commander Paramor, O.B.E., was elected Regional Chairman for the ensuing year, and Company Officer P. G. Boulter (the present Chairman) Vice-Chairman. Mr. Paramor, formerly Director of Studies at the N.F.S. College and now in command of No. 16 Fire Force, will do much to foster the N.F.S.O.A. through the difficult year ahead. Mr. C. Loveridge, of the Aldershot Sub Area, was again unanimously re-elected as Regional Secretary, and tribute was paid to his unflagging work since the inception of the Association. Many current matters came under review, including the Association's report of the proposals for the Post-War Service, and gratuities. There was a lively debate on the latter subject, the opinion of the meeting being that



## Region by Region

Officers of regular origin should also receive benefit for the work they have put in since the outbreak of war. Old Comrades Associations and the safeguarding of quarters at present held under requisition for entitled Officers, were also discussed and appropriate resolutions passed to the Regional Executive Committee for action.

### AREA 15 BRANCH MEETING

The inaugural meeting of Area 15 Branch was held at Taplow on the 5th April, 1945. F.F.C. Taylor welcomed all those present and the Chair was subsequently taken by A.F.F.C. H. Pearson, M.B.E., who was elected Area Chairman for the ensuing year. The Secretary post is to be filled by Area Officer Squire, who was unanimously elected.

A lively discussion ensued on strengthening the membership in Area 15 and all officers are now being circulated. The Regional Correspondent for *The Jet* asked for support and Column Officer Terry was elected Area Representative. Gratuities figured in debate and the Branch formulated a resolution that "gratuities should be payable to ex-regular firemen, or that one additional year for each year of War Service should be applicable for superannuation purposes".

## SOUTH WESTERN (No. 7) REGION

### No. 19 AREA

The No. 19 Fire Force Headquarters Drama Club received a special word of praise from the adjudicator (Miss Juliet Mensell) at the conclusion of their recent performance of a one act play, "The Dear Departed" by Stanley Houghton, during the Tavistock and District Drama Festival.

During the last 12 months the Drama Group has given performances of a number of plays, as the result of which substantial sums have been raised for the National Fire Service Benevolent Fund and other local appeals.

A Variety Concert in aid of the Benevolent Fund was held at the Globe Theatre, Royal Marine Barracks, Plymouth, on Saturday, 5th May, 1945. Excellent entertainment was provided by Fire Service personnel from No. 18 Area under the appropriate title of "Blaze Away." The Theatre was filled to capacity with an enthusiastic audience.

## MIDLAND (No. 9) REGION

A Meeting of the Regional Committee was held on Friday, 6th April, 1945, with Mr. Lucas in the Chair.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed. The Chairman explained that the question of increase in salaries for Women Officers would have to be left in abeyance because he could not find sufficient support to the proposal put forward by the No. 9 Regional Committee.

The question of war service chevrons for the non-uniformed members of local authorities prior to Nationalization was still being pursued, as this was closely allied to the whole question of gratuities.

He was pleased to point out that the problem of domestic accommodation for one of the members had been taken up with the Home Office, and had been concluded to the satisfaction of all concerned.

The Chairman also gave the Committee a report on the recent Council Meeting held in London, enlarging on one or two points of particular interest, especially the very vexed question of gratuities for ex-regular Officers.

The Committee was informed that Mr. Brown, who was leaving the Service, would not be in a position to continue as Regional Correspondent for *The Jet*, and Mr. Fry was elected in his place.

The Committee discussed the question of members who had left the Service and also decided to make some effort at co-ordinating the circulation of correspondence at a higher level.

## Region by Region

The Secretary from No. 40 Area, who also attended the Meeting, reported on the minutes of the last Annual General Meeting of the Area, which was held at Wolverhampton on Monday, 26th February.

## SCOTTISH (No. 11) REGION

The Annual General Meeting was held in Perth on Wednesday, 14th March, 1945, and was preceded by an official lunch. It was held in "York House" and was exceptionally well attended. The principle matters under discussion were (1) Reassessment of Officers (2) Gratuities and (3) Report of the P.W.F.S. Committee. The following office-bearers were appointed:

Chairman .. ..	Mr. A. S. Pratten (Dundee)
Vice-Chairman .. ..	Mr. R. T. Wylie (Edinburgh)
Secretary and Treasurer	Mr. G. M. Boyd (Dundee)
Auditors .. ..	Mr. H. D. Duncan (Glasgow)
	Mr. J. Mortimer (Aberdeen)
Regional Correspondent ..	Mr. R. F. Braid (Glasgow)

The Area Branches have all held their Annual General Meetings and have elected Office-bearers and Committees for 1945. In all instances the meetings were well attended and interest in the activities of the Association is well maintained.

## SOUTH EASTERN (No. 12) REGION

The first meeting of the new Regional Committee Branch was held at Speldhurst, Tunbridge Wells, on Wednesday, 4th April, 1945. The main item of discussion was the forthcoming Annual General Meeting, and a number of other points of particular interest to the Region were also discussed. The Chair was taken by Mr. R. G. Cox.

The next meeting of the Committee has been arranged for Monday, 7th May, 1945, at the same time and place.



# Wireless

THERE has been of late a tremendous volume of articles and correspondence on the important question of the Post-War Fire Service. The advantages and disadvantages of National as against local control have been put forward again and again by the respective champions. Amid all this, however, I have not yet seen any reference to wireless, and it has even been suggested by responsible officials that there may not be a place for wireless in the post-war period. It is apparent that the claims of wireless urgently need to be stated if these murmurings "in high places" are not to become translated into official policy.

## REASON FOR INTRODUCTION

Few towns that experienced heavy raiding did not also experience the feeling of helplessness that accompanied broken communications. Alternative means were hurriedly called upon to fill the gaps. Field Telephone Vans, cut-in telephones and all the other admirable devices of the Post Office to keep tele-communications going soon became commonplace, and so it was that wireless came into general use. It came mainly as a secondary means of communication. What are we going to do with it now that we have got it? Let us for a moment consider its advantages and disadvantages, as it is important that wireless should be viewed in its proper perspective before we answer.

## ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

It is not, as so many people still believe, the solution to all communications difficulties. It has limitations, and these are in some situations of a serious nature. First and most fundamental is the difficulty that by working on one wavelength the air can be used by only one person at a time. It therefore cannot attempt to take the place of disrupted telephones, except for a small number of vital messages. Under raiding conditions this represents only a fraction of the total messages, but during lull periods the situation is completely altered. This severe limitation is of little consequence owing to the small number of operational messages. The proportion that can be handled by wireless is thereby increased enormously, so that in many cases it is 100 per cent. Therein lies the clue to its usefulness in the Post-War Fire Service. It becomes not a secondary, but a primary means of communication.

The other disadvantages are much less important. The initial expense of installing sets is considerable, but this is offset by the fact that in most areas the expense has already been met. It is reasonable to assume that future replacements to keep pace with technical developments will cost less as production methods improve and costs of materials are stabilized at more normal levels. Running costs, provided the initial installations are satisfactory, are not a major item. A more serious disadvantage, especially outside the large towns, will be

## Wireless

the further drain on personnel required to operate mobile units. Fixed stations can, of course, be operated by the normal watchroom or control-room staff.

## RADIO COMMUNICATION AND RURAL AREAS

The advantage of having wireless on the fire-ground in close and intimate touch with control is obvious. Any fireman who has experienced the particularly difficult task of finding a telephone, even in the middle of a city, at 4 o'clock in the morning will appreciate that. The possibilities of wireless in rural areas, where telephones are so scattered, are tremendous. It is not uncommon for the nearest telephone at a country job to be over a mile distant. Any message back to the station usually involves a fireman being away from the fireground for a considerable time. In such cases wireless, instead of being a drain on personnel, would actually be a saving.

One peculiar advantage of wireless is the broadcast message, and when one remembers that an ordinary telephone can be linked to the wireless network, the advantage is even greater. The senior officer who can pick up his telephone and speak direct to a fireground has at his disposal something of real value to his organization.

## LIAISON WITH POLICE

The majority of schemes are shared with the Police. It is claimed that co-operation with them has not always been satisfactory because of an apparent conflict of interests, but experience in the writer's Area is that liaison has been completely satisfactory in every respect. Indeed, the Fire Service owes a great debt of gratitude for the help generously given by the Police, especially in the early stages of installation. One cannot help but deplore that the very small number of occasions where friction existed should have been so magnified. We hear nothing of the vast majority of cases where liaison has been excellent. The interests of the Police and the Fire Service are not so divergent as to make joint schemes unworkable, at least for a start. If the only way to retain wireless in the Fire Service is by means of a joint scheme, then by all means let us have it.

## WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

There is still very much to learn. The training of operators will probably require revising. The message procedure as laid down by the Home Office, while it contains much that is valuable, is also open to criticism chiefly on the grounds that it is not sufficiently practical and is far from complete. Experience also tends to show that some of the procedure is cumbersome and would be improved by simplification. These practical problems are inevitable at this stage of development, but the solutions will follow in due course if we apply ourselves diligently to their study. I believe that wireless in the Post-War Fire Service is of paramount importance. I believe that if we fail to take advantage of the product of scientific development in this small department of the Service, we may fail to take advantage of it in the bigger things—and that would indeed be calamitous.

"SOUTH EASTERN"



# WOMENS' *Page*

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

As we go to press, the news of Victory in Europe has been announced. With the elimination of enemy air attacks, reductions of personnel have been taking place throughout the Service. As a result, Women Officers in all parts of the United Kingdom are now eagerly looking towards the future, with the knowledge behind them of a war-time job well done and nearly completed.

For many, particularly the married women with families at home, the past years have meant the complete sacrifice of home life, plus the double responsibility of combining the exacting demands of the Service with essential home duties. Even less fortunate have been those bearing the anxiety of husbands or sons serving abroad—a strain which they would probably have gladly exchanged for additional household duties, however arduous. Neither must the mobile Officer be forgotten—often with dependants in the background—whose compulsory transfers to new territories, involving all the complications of acquiring knowledge of fresh personnel, new districts, those local customs which still persist everywhere in spite of Nationalization, and so on, are often unenviable.

In this knowledge, it is right that some preparation should be made for those women wishing to obtain employment in the post-war world. Therefore, we feel it to be a good thing indeed that, with this object in view, Senior Women Officers are leaving no avenues unexplored in order to place those for whose welfare they are responsible in suitable civilian occupations.

Women of the Appointments Officer standard of the Ministry of Labour are individually interviewed by their appropriate senior officer, full particulars of their qualifications, general ability and the type of job required being recorded. Close liaison between Senior Women Officers of the N.F.S. and the Appointments Officers of the Ministry of Labour has been maintained in the Regions, and already a number of Officers have been placed in suitable post-war positions. For many the years of war have meant an abandonment of pre-war professions or trades, but for others the attainment of responsible positions in the Service has developed hitherto-unknown qualities which have given them the incentive to try to carve out a new post-war career.

As with the ranks, Officers have been encouraged to avail themselves of the opportunities offered under the Educational Classes Scheme, which has been one of the metaphorical sign-posts pointing the way to civilian life, offering a variety of subjects to be studied, ranging from housewifery to commerce. This, although one of the more practical acknowledgments by the Service for past duties, is one of its lesser rewards. Its greatest, for many of us, has probably been an enlarged understanding of human nature, comradeship and friendships which will be carried on into the post-war world, and the development of that sense of humour which is so necessary to help one to over-ride the inevitable trials of any Service life.

An awareness of the present position of women as citizens who have shared the burden of the war has also grown, and it is to be hoped that the interest now being taken by so many women in the affairs of the country and the world will not be shelved during the years of reconstruction ahead.

Good luck to all Officers, whether they be returning home, pursuing careers or remaining in the Service, and may we all endeavour to keep that peace, which we all hope will before long become world-wide.—M.B.

## SELECTION BOARDS SOME LESSONS ON JUDGING MEN

I HAVE done a good deal of Selection Board work in my time and so have had much opportunity to observe their working. Whilst sitting on one of these Boards the other day I conceived the idea of jotting down some of the lessons that I have learnt in this interesting sphere.

A Selection Board is a team affair, the members of the Board and the candidates forming the team, their united object being to produce the right man in the right place. Nothing can be more important in any organization than that.

**The Chairman.** First then, what is the job of the Chairman? His initial task is to set the candidate at ease and, for this purpose, a friendly, pleasant manner is a desirable asset. It is usual for the Chairman to start by running through the main stages of the candidate's career to date. If the candidate has had a disciplinary slip, the Chairman should be aware of this from having studied the papers beforehand and should avoid bringing this out whilst the candidate is present. It can be discussed later when full information should generally be available to the Board; but, in my view, it is unnecessary to rake over troubles ten or more years old. Some Chairmen take too long over the introduction and then they do not leave sufficient time for other members of the Board to ask their questions.

The Chairman now turns the candidate over to the other members of the Board.

It is sound to let the questioning go round the Board clockwise, with a different member following the Chairman for each candidate. In this way all members of the Board get equal opportunities to put questions.

The last member to ask questions will often feel that the candidate has had sufficient opportunities to reveal his personality and knowledge, and he may, therefore, "pass". For this reason it is just as well that members of the Board should take it in turn to be the last questioner.

The Chairman should keep his eye on the clock and get through the business with reasonable expedition.

**Members of the Board.** Here are some hints for Board members—including the Chairman.

A Selection Board is not the occasion for members to air their erudition, to indulge in reminiscences or to display their views on life. They must not get into an argument with a candidate. They must be careful not to ask candidates questions which would involve their criticizing their superiors or their superiors' orders or organization. They must not mark a candidate down because he holds different opinions to those that they hold—they should also not let the candidate see what their own views are.

From first to last the Board should remember that their business is to question the candidate so as to enable him to reveal his knowledge, ability and personality. A member of a Board should be careful not to bully or embarrass a candidate and, if he sees that he has badly beaten him over some question, it is well to pass tactfully to the next one, though not before probing has made the lack of knowledge definite beyond a doubt.

A good Board member will vary his questions. I once sat on a Board where one member asked more than one hundred candidates a technical question, the answer to which he alone—of both candidates and Board members (including myself)—knew!

Members of a Board sometimes expect too much of candidates and under-rate the difficulties of suddenly being asked, at a moment's notice, to give their opinions on matters of policy; they would do well to see themselves sitting in the candidate's place.



## Selection Boards

**Questions.** Candidates should be given fair and suitable questions, and the abler the candidate, the more advanced and searching should be the questioning. A first-class man cannot show his worth on second-class questions.

The more junior the candidate the more technical should be the questions. The more senior he is, the more should he be called upon to discuss wider questions of policy.

**The Candidate.** Most candidates are nervous—but the Board should realize this is not a fault. A candidate nervous at a Board may be a courageous thruster at a fire. Racehorses are more nervous than cart horses, but they leave them standing in a race!

Candidates endeavour to cover up their nervousness in all sorts of ways. Some assume an overdone air of complete sang-froid; some lounge in their chair to show how thoroughly they feel (or would like it to be thought that they feel) at ease; some assume an aggressive, even pugnacious, manner, which is normally quite foreign to them.

Wise members of the Board will make allowance for these things, and if they want to know whether these airs and graces are merely due to nervousness, let them observe the candidate's hands or his perspiration; his feet, too, if they are visible, are often even more expressive!

A candidate should concentrate on being natural. His attitude should be, "Here I am. If you think I'm the man for the job, well, that's splendid. If not, well an even more suitable job is probably waiting for me round the corner". The most tragic thing that can happen to anyone is to be given a job or a rank beyond his capacity. That is the way lives and careers are occasionally wrecked.

A candidate should avoid verbosity—giving too long answers to questions. Board members are waiting to get on with the next question. He should speak up so that his answers can be heard.



**Judging the Candidate.** When the candidate has departed, the Board determines how he should be assessed. Some Chairmen immediately state their own views, then invite the other members of the Board to say whether they are in agreement with them or not. Some adopt Court Martial procedure, the junior officer speaking first. On the whole, I think the Chairman should speak last.

Suppose the Chairman speaks first and is the dominating type; then, if there are any weak members on the Board, they may not like to stand up to him. I wonder how many officers, who have sat on a Board, would be able to put their hand on their heart and say that they had never altered their assessment of a candidate (on first round discussion) after hearing those who have spoken before them.

To change their assessment *after* all members of the Board have spoken is quite another matter; we are all entitled to second thoughts after hearing an argument, and there must be some elasticity among members of a Board.

One Chairman of a Board that I know has a shorthand-writer present, and the first-round comments of every member of the Board are recorded, including those of the Chairman. After discussion, the Chairman summarizes the Board's views, noting whether any member of the Board is in disagreement. From these comments, a useful note on each candidate can subsequently be prepared for record and for submission to the authority convening the Board.

## Selection Boards

Members of a Board should study the candidate carefully and, personally, I find it useful to write down the thoughts that come to me concerning him—as they come. One then gets one's first, as well as one's last, impressions recorded. A Board member inevitably relies on inspiration and intuition, born of experience and an honest, earnest desire to do his duty, both by the candidate and by the Service.

It is difficult not to have personal prejudices about a candidate, but one should be sternly on one's guard against this. One must also be careful not to be disturbed by a candidate's mannerisms—they may be quite superficial and merely the result of nervousness.

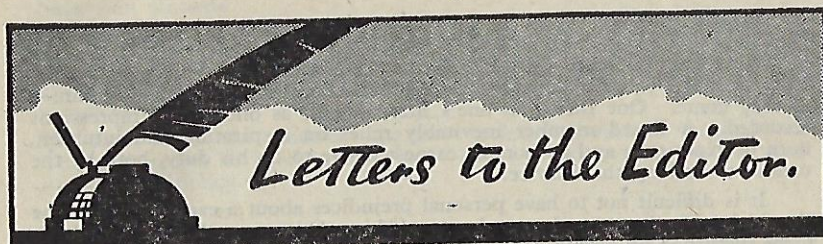
Everyone should realize that even the best of Boards occasionally makes a mistake. It may be deceived by the salesman type of candidate, with all his goods in the shop window—it may fail to do justice to an exceptionally nervous candidate who just does not interview well; or it may have before it a candidate who, for one reason or another, it is almost impossible to assess by the process of question and answer. As an Englishman, I find Scotsmen particularly difficult to assess. The members should bear in mind that if every Board were reliable in its judgment, the War Office type of Selection Board, which takes 48 hours to test and assess, would not have achieved its present firm place in the sphere of things.

Finally, there are no absolute rules for the conduct of a Board, and Chairmen must be allowed to exercise their individuality. The great thing is for officers sitting on a Board to take it very seriously, to gain experience by listening to other Board members having wider experience, and to hope that, one day, they may acquire that very valuable quality in a senior officer—to be a good judge of men.

"COURT NINE"

*It is the aim of this journal to encourage the fullest freedom of opinion and expression within the Association. Unless the fact is expressly stated, therefore, views put forward in these pages, whether in the Editorial columns or in articles, should not necessarily be regarded as expressing the considered policy of the Association.*





Dear Mr. Editor,

# EX-REGULAR v. A.F.S. OFFICERS

To put it very mildly, I, as one of the so-called pampered ex-regulars, with 23 years completed service, was amazed to read the letter signed "Not an ex-regular." Such views, I feel sure, represent and are held by only a very small percentage of the war-time firemen.

My experience has been that the ex-regular fireman is held in very high esteem by his war-time colleague. Similarly, the ex-regular has a high opinion of the A.F.S. man, who volunteered and commenced his training in 1938-39. Never shall I forget the admirable "guts," determination, willingness and co-operation of the A.F.S. man in those dark days of 1940-41.

Your correspondent admits the ex-regular was needed to form the core of an expanding Service. The obvious necessity was to "reserve" him, and in these circumstances he had no option. Later, however, he was permitted to volunteer for flying duties, and a considerable number did so, though only a small percentage passed the high standard of medical required for such work. The fact that the ex-regular has not changed his occupation since the outbreak of war is not peculiar to the Fire Service. This applies equally to the financial aspect, and I venture to say that many A.F.S. personnel are receiving a salary considerably in excess of their pre-war one.

Has "Not an ex-regular" ever thought how long it took to obtain the privileges he refers to? Surely he would prefer them to be retained, and, if the Service is to remain Nationalized, form a basis on which to establish an efficient and contented Service attracting the best type

of recruit. He might even consider an appointment himself in such a Service in the post-war era.

I must point out that the pension rights of the ex-regular are being paid for by him, to the tune of 5% of his salary with a maximum of his pre-war salary, plus 50%. Further, it took the majority of pre-war firemen 10 years to reach the figure of £4/10/0 unless promotion came his way, yet, whatever rank he has attained, no guarantee as to his post-war position is as yet known. For a period of possibly 5½ years he has remained static in respect of permanent advancement which would ultimately affect the amount of his pension. This, in my opinion, is a very important point, as I do not agree that had there not been a war he would still be receiving £4/10/0.

One point I will agree upon, is that the bulk of the ex-regulars were not administratively minded, and to the very many able "paper men" who have entered the N.F.S. he is extremely grateful. Finally, may I ask your correspondent to tackle this problem through the N.F.S.O.A., in order that all A.F.S. personnel shall receive such benefits and privileges as the ex-regular. But, for heaven's sake, don't pull the latter down.

W.G.H.

Dear Mr. Editor,

# PAPER WAR IN THE N.F.S.

Of course "Onlooker" is correct! It is simply disgraceful that there should be so much paper about in time of war. Everyone knows that the Englishman's word is his bond, so that *prima-facie* there can be no reason for K.501s, K.507s, K.513s, K.514s, etc.

Would it not be simpler to do away with all forms and just trust everyone from Fireman to Fire Force Commander and from Storeman to Area Stores Officer? In all my experience of the Fire Service, never have I known anyone to ask for more than they want, to lose equipment (particularly valuable operational equipment), and (heaven forbid!) to steal even such minor articles as bicycle lamps.

"Onlooker's" argument is too obvious to be gainsaid. Let us have no control of public money and inculcate by propaganda that *Honesty is the best Policy*. Having then succeeded in this country in a comparatively short time, why not then start on the Nazis. Why not!

Yours sincerely,

"BYSTANDER"

Dear Mr. Editor,

# "ACCELERATING FIRE CALLS"

The article on this subject which appeared in the April issue was read with interest by the members of this Headquarters, and a great deal of sympathy was felt for the unfortunate householder depicted in the line-drawing at the end of the article—until our Communications Officer pointed out that he was maintaining his watch at the side of a Police street pillar unit (which is installed with a microphone to enable full particulars to be given to the police), and not a fire alarm.

Yours sincerely,

S.F.

Dear Sir,

# FIRE PROTECTION

As a member of the first Fire Protection Long Course held at the National Fire Service College and being now appointed as an Area Fire Protection Officer, I am naturally very interested in the aims of the N.F.S.O.A. in respect of post-war Fire Protection as set out in the Appendix to the Annual Report.

The present system of granting licences in respect of Places of Public Entertainment and for the storage of inflammable substances is most regrettably lax in many parts

# Letters to the Editor

of the country, and the standards demanded vary enormously. It is by no means uncommon to find that the inspection of, say, a cinema is made the responsibility of an over-worked Borough Surveyor, who, apart from the structural angle, has no knowledge of the points to investigate. Personal experience has shown that it is often extremely doubtful whether he has ever seen a copy of the Cinematograph Regulations!

Revised legislation to increase the functions and responsibilities of the National Fire Service would naturally lead to a considerable tightening-up, but this would, in the opinion of the public, be associated with controls and restrictive measures, against which it is only reasonable to expect a bitter revulsion of feeling with the cessation of hostilities. Further, it has been argued by many eminent authorities that no law is a good law unless the public demand it, and so one is reluctantly forced to the conclusion that the legislation we seek, highly desirable though it is, will not be forthcoming until we have a disaster in this country sufficient to inflame public opinion to demand protection.

Without fresh legislation, the suggestion that a Local Authority should not issue a licence without having before it a report from a National Fire Service Officer is fraught with snags and dangers. To quote the Petroleum (Consolidation) Act, 1928, is to give sufficient example of the complications likely to ensue. Any appeal against the decision of a Local Authority is lodged with the Secretary of State, and his position would be seriously embarrassed were it to transpire that the Local Authority's decision was based on the written report of an N.F.S. Officer (who is, of course, himself an agent of the Secretary of State).

May the efforts of the N.F.S.O.A. to secure the necessary legislation be crowned with success, but it behoves all Fire Protection Officers to make the best of the present system in the meantime. Results can be obtained, even as things are, by those who are prepared to fight for them.

F.G.M.



## Letters to the Editor

Dear Mr. Editor,

### LONDON COMES TO YORKSHIRE

Queer things happen in the N.F.S. I wonder if any of your readers have ever seen an A.O. sitting on the edge of a bath, struggling to hold between her knees a small boy who shows hearty dislike of soap and water by kicking, biting and snarling? Or have they ever seen a G.O. standing on a sea-side promenade, regarding her cap perched on top of a lamp post and a small, dark female imp slithering down to dance with glee at her feet?

It will probably be remembered that the N.F.S. was asked to help the Ministry of Health in the task of bringing thousands of mothers and children away from the danger of flying bombs. Like other Regions we helped with transport, cleaning billets, mending and entertainment. Then we heard that the Ministry of Health had a big problem—providing hostels for children who, for some reason or other, had not settled in private billets. A lion-hearted Fire Force Commander suggested that a redundant training school might be suitable, and the Ministry of Health agreed with alacrity.

A few days later six young Londoners arrived in an old hall in a little village, each accompanied by a report on his misdemeanours or peculiarities. Shortly afterwards, a women's training school became vacant and the staff (a G.O., a S.L/Fw., a L/Fw. and a Fw., who were asked if they could tackle a new and strange job) received the suggestion with enthusiasm. This time the Ministry of Health said "Boys from 5 to 8 and girls from 10 to 14", with the result that a mixed batch of six little Londoners arrived at a breezy golf house on the North Sea coast.

The numbers quickly grew, and now we have usually about 15 to 20 foster children in each hostel. Although the original idea was for a short stay while being fitted by control and discipline for re-billeting, many of the children have

been with us since August, 1944, and the very suggestion of a private billet is received by them with horror!

Of course, it is no easy task housing, feeding, clothing and, above all, controlling 20 very quick-witted and lively children. Forms in triplicate were nothing new to us, but we have learned much about the wearing-out-rate of boots, trousers and frocks and the reluctance of some parents to provide for their offspring. We also know something about brain storms, fighting, home sickness, lies, pilfering, parents' worries and all kinds of physical and psychological ailments. There have been times when we thought we should become psychological cases ourselves. Imagine the effort to keep 20 boys happy and occupied on a pouring wet Sunday!

One cannot tell of half the crises and difficulties that have arisen and been safely passed, but there are some of us who treasure many other memories. The first time the little boys could go into the sea, when someone had contrived bathing trunks from an old jumper—the dawning appreciation of soap and water, tooth brushes and combs—the pale, wan, strained little waif developing into a plump, pink, hearty child—the gradual reaction to kindly, but firm, discipline. These things, and the laughter which we so often must struggle to suppress until we reach the seclusion of the office, have made the job worth while.

We do not know how long our foster children will stay with us, but when the time comes for them to return to their homes, we hope that many will remember their stay in Yorkshire as a happy time. Meanwhile, I think these rather unusual happenings are worth recording as the heroic patience and work of those men and women whose daily care for these children is a valuable contribution to the National Fire Service's war record.

The photograph on page 13 depicts the foster mothers and children at one of our hostels.

Yours faithfully,

"MADAM'S MADAM"

## VACANCIES AND APPOINTMENTS

The following details have been received of vacancies circulated and appointments made by the Fire Service Department during the period 24th March to 30th April, 1945.

1. TEMPORARY ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS UNDER NATIONAL SAVINGS COMMITTEE—invitation issued 27th March, 1945, to all ranks.
2. FIRE STAFF OFFICER, GRADE III AT HEADQUARTERS (item 3 of list in February issue). Mr. E. J. Gunnnett, Company Officer of No. 5 Region, appointed 3rd April, 1945.
3. INSPECTOR, GRADE III AT HEADQUARTERS (item 3 of list in February issue). Mr. L. O. Clarke, Senior Company Officer of No. 8 Region, appointed 3rd April, 1945.
4. DEPUTY SECRETARY (ESTABLISHMENTS OFFICER) AT NATIONAL FIRE SERVICE COLLEGE (item 2 of list in last issue). Mr. J. G. Eggerdon, Leading Fireman of No. 5 Region, appointed 5th April, 1945.
5. AREA OFFICER, No. 2 FIRE FORCE (item 3 of list in last issue). Miss I. M. M. Watson, Group Officer of No. 5 Region, appointed 9th April, 1945.