

CITY OF SHEFFIELD FIRE BRIGADE



ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

FOR THE

Year ended 31st March, 1965

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FIRE BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS,
DIVISION STREET,
SHEFFIELD, 1

CITY OF SHEFFIELD FIRE BRIGADE

FIRE BRIGADE COMMITTEE

1964 — 1965

THE LORD MAYOR

Alderman Albert Smith, J.P.

CHAIRMAN

Alderman H. Redgate, J.P.

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

Councillor C. J. Moseley

MEMBERS

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Councillor G. E. Salmons

Councillor F. C. Toplis,
B.E.M.

Councillor J. A. Towns

Councillor R. Viner

Fire Brigade Headquarters,
Division Street, Sheffield, 1.

To: The Chairman and Members of the Fire Brigade
Committee of the Sheffield City Council

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my report on the work of the City of Sheffield Fire Brigade for the year ended 31st March, 1965.

1. Fires and Special Service Calls

During the year ended 31st March, 1965, the Brigade attended 2,777 calls of all kinds. The total fire loss was £328,720.

(a) FIRE CALLS (WITHIN THE CITY)

(i) <i>Types of Fires</i>	Station					Total 1964-65	Total 1963-64
	1	2	3	4	5		
Small fires (dealt with by one pump)	601	203	78	98	144	1,124	976
Medium fires (2-10 pumps) ...	10	—	—	2	—	12	8
Chimney fires	129	98	12	60	97	396	540
Grass fires	54	57	52	119	70	352	106
False Alarms (Good Intent)	106	14	11	13	19	163	154
False Alarms (Malicious) ...	58	20	15	56	20	169	150
False Alarms (Electrical and Mechanical Defects) ...	26	9	—	2	7	44	40
False Alarms (Accidental) ...	11	2	—	—	5	18	20
TOTALS	995	403	168	350	362	2,278	1,994

(ii) <i>Means used to Extinguish Fires</i>	Station					Total 1964-65	Total 1963-64
	1	2	3	4	5		
Jets from pumps and mains	158	71	22	26	40	317	233
Jets from hose reels ...	388	194	54	121	162	919	890
Portable extinguishers ...	146	53	37	42	62	340	299
Other means	102	40	29	90	47	308	208
TOTALS	794	358	142	279	311	1,884	1,630

Fire Station No. 2 : Darnall Road	Fire Station No. 4 : Mansfield Road
Fire Station No. 3 : Norton Lane (up to 24th December, 1964)	Fire Station No. 5 : Elm Lane
Lowdges Road (from 25th December, 1964)	

(iii) <i>How calls were Received</i>	Station					Total 1964-65	Total 1963-64
	1	2	3	4	5		
Exchange Telephone ...	812	340	147	313	321	1,933	1,723
Fire and Police Box ...	106	14	15	11	13	159	148
Running Call	31	34	5	23	12	105	65
Direct Line	3	—	—	—	—	3	3
Automatic Fire Alarm ...	34	14	—	1	11	60	44
Late Call	9	1	1	2	5	18	11
TOTALS	995	403	168	350	362	2,278	1,994

Lives lost at fires	4
Persons injured	16
Persons rescued or escaping	37
Brigade personnel injured at fires	14

Two at one time	41
More than two at a time		5

Ashes, soot	9
Blow lamp	11
Chimney on fire, not confined to chimney	11
Chimney, sparks from (outside building)	5
Cutting and welding apparatus	11
Doubtful	26
Electric blanket	6
Electric cooker	39
Electric fire, heater, radiator	19
Electric iron	1
Electric motor	10
Electric refrigerator	5
Electric wire and cable	39
Electric wireless and television	4
Electric, other apparatus	20
Explosives, fireworks	3

Analysis of Causes of Fires

Inside Buildings (*continued*)

Fire in grate igniting furniture, furnishings or clothing	...	11
Fire in grate igniting structural timber under hearth	... ..	7
Fire in grate igniting other materials	... ..	13
Fish frying range (all fuels)	... ..	14
Flue	... ..	6
Furnace (solid fuel)	... ..	3
Gas (town) burner, jet, ring	... ..	10
Gas cooker	... ..	15
Gas fire, heater, radiator	... ..	8
Gas, other apparatus	... ..	17
Incendiarism	... ..	4
Lightning	... ..	1
Liquefied petroleum gases apparatus	... ..	6
Matches	... ..	4
Matches, children playing with	... ..	108
Mechanical heat or sparks	... ..	12
Metal, hot	... ..	19
Motor vehicle	... ..	9
Oil engine	... ..	2
Oil lamp, stove	... ..	17
Oil, other apparatus	... ..	8
Rubbish burning	... ..	29
Smoking materials	... ..	83
Spontaneous combustion	... ..	1
Stove (solid fuel) igniting structural woodwork	... ..	4
Stove (solid fuel) igniting other materials	... ..	3
Taper, candle, naked light	... ..	4
Taper, candle, naked light, children playing with	... ..	9
Miscellaneous and undefined	... ..	10
Unknown source of ignition	... ..	28
Total fires in buildings	... ..	684

Other than those in Buildings

Ashes, soot	... ..	50
Chimney, sparks from (outside building)	... ..	3
Cutting and welding apparatus	... ..	12
Doubtful	... ..	2
Electric wire and cable	... ..	14
Electric, other apparatus	... ..	4
Explosives, fireworks	... ..	2
Gas (town) apparatus	... ..	7
Incendiarism	... ..	3
Intentional burning of grassland, gorse, etc.	... ..	13
Liquefied petroleum gases apparatus	... ..	6
Locomotives, sparks from	... ..	34
Matches	... ..	16
Matches, children playing with	... ..	325
Mechanical heat or sparks	... ..	10

Other than those in Buildings—*continued*

Metal, hot	4
Motor vehicles	68
Oil apparatus	6
Rubbish burning	105
Smoking materials	73
Spontaneous combustion	9
Sun's rays	3
Taper, candle, naked light, children playing with	15
Miscellaneous and undefined	2
Unknown source of ignition	18

Total fires other than those in buildings 804

TOTAL FIRES ATTENDED (excluding chimney fires) ... 1,488

(b) FIRE CALLS OUTSIDE THE CITY BOUNDARY

	Station					Total 1964-65	Total 1963-64
	1	2	3	4	5		
West Riding of Yorkshire ...	13	4	—	3	64	84	64
Derbyshire	—	2	5	72	—	79	63
Rotherham	—	8	—	—	2	10	3
TOTALS	13	14	5	75	66	173	130

(c) SPECIAL SERVICE CALLS

Classification of Calls	Station					Total 1964-65
	1	2	3	4	5	
Persons Released or Rescued	23	5	3	2	1	34
Noxious Fumes	54	18	3	8	9	92
Assistance to Local Authority Departments	3	—	—	—	2	5
Assistance to Public	22	2	4	6	4	38
Assistance to Commerce and Industry	20	7	2	—	2	31
Pumping out Flood Water	6	2	—	—	1	9
Assistance at Accidents	17	8	7	3	5	40
Dangerous Structures	37	8	2	1	6	54
Assistance to Police	13	3	1	1	3	21
Rescue of Animals	1	—	—	—	1	2
TOTALS	196	53	22	21	34	326

(d) FREQUENCY OF CALLS

Number of days when 1 call was received	...	...	...	...	...	6
Number of days when 2 - 5 calls were received	...	...	...	...	...	125
Number of days when 6 - 10 calls were received	...	...	...	...	...	165
Number of days when 11 - 20 calls were received	...	...	...	...	...	61
Number of days when 21 - 30 calls were received	...	...	...	...	...	7
Number of days when 31 - 50 calls were received	...	...	...	...	...	1

(e) DETAILS OF ESTIMATED FIRE LOSS (EXCLUDING CHIMNEYS)

Apl.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Total
£10,584	£1,983	£1,972	£90,093	£10,024	£7,539	£4,060	£3,923	£30,041	£9,827	£102,173	£56,501	£328,720

DETAILS OF SOME OF THE MORE NOTABLE INCIDENTS ARE GIVEN BELOW:—

FIRES

James Dixon and Sons, Cornish Place, Sheffield 6. Date and Time of Call: 2nd April, 1964; 12.03 hours. Time of Arrival: 12.07 hours.

This fire originated in a ground floor electrical transformer room; it was caused by a faulty contact on a 200 amp. fuse, and arcing ignited cable insulation in a timber lined vertical duct. Fire spread rapidly up the duct to the upper levels of the building and to the roof; the building was well alight when the Brigade were called. Two jets were used by crews wearing oxygen sets and the outbreak was under control within five minutes of arrival. This incident clearly illustrated the dangers of vertical service ducts where no form of suitable fire stopping is incorporated in the structure.

Yorkshire Insurance House, Market Place, Sheffield 1. Date and Time of Call: 10th April, 1964; 19.49 hours. Time of Arrival: 19.51 hours.

These premises comprise a modern multi-storey office block and the fire started on the fifth floor after normal office hours. The resident caretaker discovered the outbreak and, in spite of the modern construction of the building, fire spread so rapidly that he was unable to ascend the normal stair to his flat on the sixth floor to ensure the safety of his family. He subsequently gained access via the external fire escape and was able to remove his wife and child to a place of safety. The fire was extinguished by crews wearing oxygen sets, three jets were used, the "stop" message being returned twenty-one minutes after arrival. The fire was caused by the ignition of cable insulation serving a multi-plug socket. The reason for this was not clear because of the extent of the damage, but the plug was fitted with a 13 amp. fuse when a much lower rating would have been adequate.

88 Harcourt Road, Sheffield 10. Date and Time of Call: 19th April, 1964; 02.41 hours. Time of Arrival: 02.46 hours.

This incident involved a house in multiple occupation; a man, aged 27 years, died in a first floor bedroom.

Upon arrival, immediate entry was made into the bedroom where the bed was well alight. The occupant was found lying on the floor; he was removed and mouth to mouth resuscitation was given immediately. This was followed by oxygen from an automatic resuscitator, and treatment was continued en route to hospital but he was pronounced dead on arrival.

A full enquiry revealed that the dead man had been drinking heavily during the previous evening and there were two possible causes of fire; the careless disposal of smoking materials or the ignition of the bedding from an electric radiator found close to the bed.

Students' Hostel, Broomhall Road, Sheffield 10. Date and Time of Call: 27th May, 1964; 13.03 hours. Time of Arrival: 13.06 hours.

Fire broke out in a student's bedroom on the fourth floor of this new six-storey hostel block. The plastic insulation on the flex connected to a bedside lamp was ignited by a short circuit and fire spread to the bed when the room was unoccupied. This incident clearly demonstrated the advantages of pre-planning for fire during the design stage. A student discovering the fire operated the alarm system and this put into operation a standard fire procedure which resulted in the outbreak being rapidly extinguished using one of the fixed hose reels which had been installed at each floor level and, although the Brigade arrived within three minutes of the call, the fire was well under control and all occupants accounted for.

W. Tyzack, Sons and Turner Limited, Little London Works, Little London Road, Sheffield 8. Date and Time of Call: 13th July, 1964; 18.40 hours. Time of Arrival: 18.44 hours.

The whole area of false roof, consisting of some 11,000 square feet, was involved when the Brigade arrived, and fire had broken through the roof in several places. The roof had collapsed on both sides of the main entrance and fire had spread down into the offices at first floor level and was well alight. The fire was brought under control at 19.33 hours by the use of ten jets, the last appliance returning to the Station at 09.25 hours the next morning.

The fire was first reported to the Brigade when a Policeman on his beat saw flames breaking through the roof at the front of the building, the call being received by Brigade Control at 18.40 hours. At 18.30 hours, employees at the opposite side of the works yard saw fire break through the roof in two places at the rear of the premises and, at 18.35 hours, a woman cleaner discovered the fire in the false roof and reported it to a senior member of the staff. An employee attempted to put a call through to the Brigade at 18.32 hours by use of the Time Office telephone but, by this time, the whole of the works telephone system was out of action because of the fire and the man went to a public house some distance away to make the call which was received in Brigade Control five minutes after the original call from the Police.

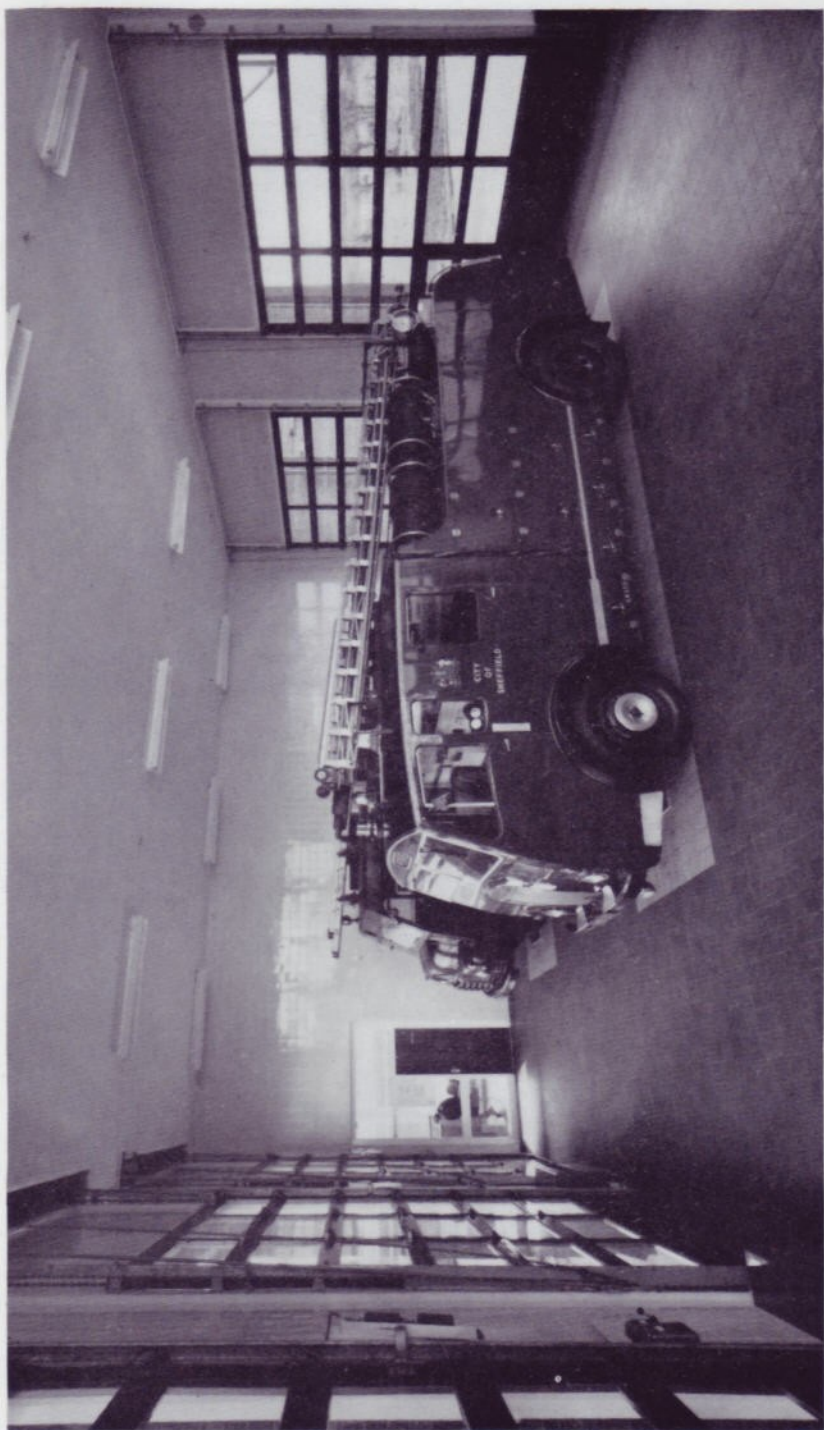
Evidence suggests that the fire started soon after 17.30 hours but was not reported to the Brigade until flames broke through the roof about an hour afterwards.

784 Grimesthorpe Road, Sheffield 4. Date and Time of Call: 22nd August, 1964; 04.24 hours. Time of Arrival: 04.29 hours.

This fire involved a single type terraced dwelling comprising ground and first floors with an attic at second floor level. Upon arrival, the ground floor room was burning fiercely and neighbours were attempting to extinguish the fire with buckets of water. The Officer in Charge ascertained that a man aged 83 years had jumped from the first floor window but that his wife was still in the house. The fire had spread rapidly up the stairway to the bedroom and attic and two men wearing breathing apparatus entered the first floor bedroom via the window and, within four minutes of entry time, the severely burned body of the woman was brought from the top floor attic. The injured man subsequently recovered from his ordeal.

A full enquiry revealed that both occupants were asleep in the first floor bedroom when the man awoke to find smoke entering the bedroom. He attempted to go down the stairs but these were impassable and, asking his wife to follow, he jumped from the window—a drop of about 11-ft.—into the street where he was found by a passer-by. The old lady must have retreated up to the attic floor where she was discovered beneath the window, this being about 25-ft. from ground level at the rear.

It was not possible to ascertain with any degree of accuracy what caused the fire, but the solid fuel fire was not guarded and the outbreak appeared to have originated in the vicinity of the hearth.



The Appliance Room of the new Station



The new Fire Station at Lowedges Road

F. Gresham and Company Limited, (Timber Merchants), Chesterfield Road, Sheffield 8. Date and Time of Call: 29th August, 1964; 15.55 hours Time of Arrival: 16.00 hours.

This fire originated in dry grass at approximately 1530 hours and spread to new timber stacked in the open. A moderate wind assisted the spread of fire to stacks of timber on a steep gradient. Five jets from three pumps were delivering approximately 800 gallons of water per minute within ten minutes of the call being received and seventy-five per cent of the timber stocks on the site was saved.

H. Ponsford Limited, (House Furnishers), 579-601, London Road, Sheffield, 2. Date and Time of Call: 18th December, 1964; 18.21 hours. Time of Arrival: 18.25 hours.

The first and second floors of the rear warehouse section of these premises were well alight when the Brigade arrived. The fire had been discovered by an employee about 18.16 hours and, despite the efforts of the staff using portable extinguishers, the outbreak gained a firm hold in the heavily stocked storerooms. Water from four jets was necessary to control the fire and every effort made to protect the unaffected showroom areas. Although some water damage occurred, the sales areas were quickly available for normal business.

63, Longley Avenue West, Sheffield 5. Date and Time of Call: 3rd January, 1965; 10.33 hours. Time of Arrival: 10.39 hours.

This incident involved the death of a woman, aged 87 years. Damage by fire was slight and investigations showed that she had probably been dusting the mantelpiece above an unguarded fire when her clothing became ignited. A daughter aged 38 years, heard her Mother screaming and was herself badly burned in trying to extinguish the flames. Both were taken to hospital where the old lady died nearly three weeks later.

124, Sandygate Road, Sheffield, 10. Date and Time of Call: 30th January, 1965; 17.35 hours. Time of Arrival: 17.41 hours.

The ground floor of this house was heavily smoke logged when the Brigade arrived. An immediate entry was made and a man, aged 71 years, was found unconscious on the kitchen floor. He was removed and given mouth to mouth resuscitation followed by the use of an automatic oxygen resuscitator. This was continued in the ambulance on the way to hospital where the casualty subsequently recovered. It was ascertained that the man had probably fallen asleep in a chair and a newspaper had slipped from his knees onto an electric radiator.

79, Croft Buildings, Sheffield, 1. Date and Time of Call: 21st February, 1965; 20.07 hours. Time of Arrival: 20.11 hours.

The Brigade were called to this flat by the City Police after the badly burned body of a man, aged 52 years, had been found on the charred remains of a bed, the fire having burned itself out some time previously. An investigation by the Police revealed that the man had not been seen since he was assisted home in an intoxicated condition some four days previously. Two possible causes of fire were revealed: the charred remains of an electric blanket were found in the bed and although this was still connected to a power socket an examination of the blanket switch showed that this was in the "off" position and this cause was eliminated. A packet of cigarettes and cigarette ends were found on a table beside the bed. It was known that the man had been in the habit of smoking in bed and, in view of his condition, it seemed likely that he had accidentally set fire to the bedding whilst smoking. Following an examination of the damage, evidence was given that the fire had burned out owing to lack of oxygen and that this had probably occurred some considerable time previously. This was supported by the medical evidence and accepted by H.M. Coroner.

W. Emery and Company Limited, 167, Arundel Street, Sheffield, 1. Date and Time of Call: 23rd February, 1965; 07.54 hours. Time of Arrival: 07.57 hours.

This fire again demonstrated the dangers of rapid fire spread in the older type of industrial and commercial premises. The outbreak probably originated from a coke burning stove in a first floor room and spread through a large proportion of the building within a few minutes of discovery; fire was on all floors of the four storey building when the Brigade arrived. Eight jets were used to prevent further spread, the "stop" message being circulated at 08.46 hours and the last appliance returned to Station nine hours later. Structural collapse occurred in the early stages and this, combined with the highly flammable nature of some of the goods stored in the premises, made fire fighting particularly hazardous. There were, however, no casualties to staff or Brigade personnel.

Phillips Furnishing Stores Limited, 37, The Moor, Sheffield, 1. Date and Time of Call: 16th March, 1965; 19.51 hours. Time of Arrival: 19.53 hours.

Fire spread with extreme rapidity in this modern furnishing store. It was obvious upon arrival that a "flash over" had occurred. Plate glass from the display windows had been forced out by the rapid ignition of the highly combustible gases produced by the fire and the ground and first floors were seriously involved. Three jets were quickly in use and the "stop" message sent back to Control within four minutes of arrival. The outbreak occurred during the period outside normal hours but this was one of the rare occasions when direct evidence from passers-by was available. The fire was seen to develop from a display lamp on a bed in the shop window and, despite the fact that two members of the general public ran to a nearby telephone to call the Brigade, the fire developed with explosive force. One eye witness stated that she could hear the fire appliances approaching when the plate glass windows were suddenly blown across the pavement.

The building was of fire resisting construction and damage was largely confined to the ground and first floors. Large stocks of furniture in the basement were protected by the use of salvage sheets. However, this incident showed clearly that serious fires can occur in buildings of modern fire resisting construction; walls and floors may be adequate to resist spread of fire but fire will always travel via unprotected vertical openings, stairways, and so on.

Special Services

Special service calls totalled 326 and produced the usual wide variety of incidents—persons trapped in road accidents, leaking petrol tanks, dangerous structures, flooded buildings, spillages of chemicals and other dangerous substances.

2. Fire Appliances and Vehicles

Regular Brigade

All first line appliances have been fitted with two-tone horns. The horns, which were used experimentally first on the Wireless Car, have proved much more efficacious than the fire bell in clearing traffic.

The Brigade appliances and vehicles now total 38 as follows:—

Self propelled Pump	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Pump Escapes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Water Tenders	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Turntable Ladders (both fitted with pumps)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Trailer and Portable Pumps	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Emergency Tender	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Wireless Car	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Lorries, Tenders and Vans	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Staff Cars	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
								<hr/>
								38
								<hr/>

Auxiliary Fire Service

The Austin Countryman, RGC 637 has been returned to the Home Office and has been replaced by an Austin Gipsy Personnel Carrier, 921 FUW.

The number of appliances held on loan from the Home Office for the Auxiliary Fire Service is 23 as follows:—

Self Propelled Pumps	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Control Unit	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Hose Layer	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Pipe Carrier	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Transportable Water Unit	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Wireless Unit (Land Rover equipped with Wireless)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Austin Gipsy Personnel Carrier	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Motor Cycles	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
								23
								—

3. Fire Stations and Premises

The new Fire Station at Low Edges Road was completed during the year and was officially opened by the Lord Mayor on Wednesday, 31st March, 1965.

The new Station is on the Greenhill/Bradway housing estate and is adjacent to the proposed Greenhill By-pass. It is similar in design to the Mansfield Road Fire Station but certain modifications have been made to the design in the light of the experience of that Fire Station and also to suit the differing site conditions.

The Appliance Room has accommodation for three appliances—two regular and one Auxiliary Fire Service. Also on the ground floor are Offices, the Mess Room, Kitchen and on the first floor, Lecture and Recreation Room and Dormitory.

The premises at Norton Lane which housed the old Station are still occupied as Brigade Workshops and Stores and as garages for Auxiliary Fire Service appliances but because of the development that is taking place in the area the Brigade will have to quit these premises by the Summer of 1966.

Plans for the Workshops and Stores to be built on the land adjoining the Darnall Road Fire Station together with Auxiliary Fire Service garages have been prepared. Permission for the work to proceed has been received from the Home Office and it is hoped to commence very shortly, because it is essential that these Workshops and Stores be available within the next 18 - 24 months.

The new Offices at the Central Fire Station, Division Street, were completed during the year together with the Kitchen and Mess Room. Certain further minor adaptations in connection with the Mess Room have still to be carried out but the major problem at this station will be the building which housed the old canteen. This building is some 100 years old and is in a dilapidated condition. It would appear that the only solution would be for it to be demolished and garages erected to house ancillary vehicles and Auxiliary Fire Service appliances.

No works apart from minor repairs have been necessary at Station 2, Darnall Road, Station 4, Mansfield Road, and Station 5, Elm Lane.

4. Personnel

I regret to have to report the death on the 11th September, 1964 of Divisional Officer N. Holmes.

In May, 1964, the strength of the Fire Prevention Department was increased mainly to cope with the additional work under the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963. The number of Station Officers was increased from 2 to 4, and Sub-Officers from 2 to 4 but the number of Leading Firemen was reduced from 2 to 1.

As at the 31st March, 1965, the uniformed staff of the Brigade was:—

	<i>Authorised</i>	<i>Actual</i>
Chief Fire Officer	1	1
Assistant Chief Officer	1	1
Divisional Officers (Grade III)	4	4
Assistant Divisional Officers	3	3
Station Officers	14	14
Sub Officers	25	24
Leading Firemen	24	25
Firemen	173	171
	<u>245</u>	<u>243</u>

The changes during the year were as follows:—

- 1 Divisional Officer died.
 - 1 Sub Officer transferred to Oxfordshire County Fire Brigade.
 - 1 Fireman transferred to Norwich Fire Brigade.
 - 1 Fireman transferred to Durham County Fire Brigade.
 - 1 Sub Officer retired on completion of 25 years service.
 - 1 Leading Fireman retired on completion of 25 years service.
 - 1 Fireman retired on completion of 25 years service.
 - 1 Leading Fireman retired on attaining the age of 55.
 - 2 Firemen retired on attaining the age of 55.
 - 1 Fireman retired on medical grounds.
 - 5 Firemen resigned.
-
- 1 Sub Officer returned from secondment to the Home Office Fire Service Training Centre.
- and 18 Firemen (including 1 Control Room Attendant) were appointed.
-
- 17 applications to join the Brigade were not proceeded with for the following reasons:—
- 6 Applicants did not attend for interview.
 - 3 Had not the necessary chest measurement.
 - 1 Was under height.
 - 1 Failed the educational test.
- and 6 Withdrew their applications
-

Civilian Establishment

An additional civilian clerk was appointed to assist in the Fire Prevention Department.

The number of civilians in the employ of the Brigade as at 31st March, 1965 was as follows:—

Official Staff

Senior Administrative Officer	...	...	...	...	1
Finance Officer	...	...	...	...	1
Supplies Officer	...	...	...	...	1
Workshops Officer	...	...	...	...	1
Clerks (Female)	...	...	...	...	3
Shorthand Typists	...	...	...	...	4
Storekeeper	...	...	...	...	1
					<hr/> 12 <hr/>

Workpeople

Mechanics	...	...	...	...	3
Semi-skilled mechanic	...	...	...	...	1
Electrician	...	...	...	...	1
Painters	...	...	...	...	2
Plumber	...	...	...	...	1
Joiner	...	...	...	...	1
Cooks & Assistant Cooks	...	...	...	...	6 (part time)
Cleaners	...	...	...	...	4 (1 full time, 3 part time)
Tailoress	...	...	...	...	1 (part time)
					<hr/> 20 <hr/>

Training

The following personnel attended Training Courses as indicated below during the year:—

Centre	Type of Course	Number Attending
Leeds Collective Training Centre	Recruits	22 Firemen
Fire Service College, Dorking and Fire Service College Annexe, Moreton-in-Marsh	<div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"> <div style="font-size: 2em; vertical-align: middle;">}</div> <div> Command Long Fire Prevention Special Fire Prevention Sub Officers </div> </div>	1 Divisional Officer 1 Sub Officer 1 Station Officer 3 Sub Officers
Home Office Fire Service Training Centre, Moreton- in-Marsh	Emergency Fire Fighting	1 Assistant Divisional Officer 2 Sub Officers 10 Firemen
Civil Defence School, Falfield	Civil Defence Instructors	1 Assistant Divisional Officer
Police College, Grantley Hall	Police War Duties	1 Assistant Divisional Officer
London Fire Brigade	Breathing Apparatus Instructors	1 Sub Officer 2 Leading Firemen

Promotion Examinations

During the year, nine Firemen passed the qualifying examination for promotion to Leading Fireman; four Firemen passed the Sub Officer Examination; and one Leading Fireman passed the Station Officer Examination.

One Leading Fireman also passed the Graduateship Examination of the Institution of Fire Engineers and by doing so also became qualified for promotion to Station Officer.

Decorations, Awards and Commendations

Fireman 53 J. H. Dawson, under the Royal Warrant dated 1st June, 1954, was awarded the Fire Brigade Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

Discipline

One Fireman was found guilty of a charge of absence from duty and the punishment awarded, under the Fire Services (Discipline) Regulations, was a reprimand.

Pensioners

I regret to have to report the deaths of pensioners J. Rabjohn, D. Roper and F. Littlewood on the 24th December, 1964, the 5th January and the 10th March, 1965, respectively.

5. Hydrants

During the half yearly inspections and cleaning of hydrants, such minor defects as were noted have been repaired by the Brigade Water Department, 14,549 such inspections being made.

Defects of a more serious nature such as broken spindles, defective valves and boxes, etc. have been attended to by the Sheffield Corporation Waterworks.

A total of 221 hydrants were reported as being defective in some way and, of this number, 12 were considered surplus to the requirements of both the Brigade and the Waterworks and were either removed or abandoned.

Of this total, however, 73 were considered necessary for fire fighting purposes and, being of the "Sheffield" pattern, were replaced by hydrants of the British Standard pattern.

A total of 46 plans and hydrant schemes for development areas were examined and approval given for the installation of 123 new hydrants, all of which will be placed on footpaths or verges to avoid vehicular obstruction.

242 British Standard Hydrant Marking Plates have been fitted, by way of initial marking and of replacement.

6. Fire Prevention Department

Details of the work carried out by the Department during the year are given below:—

(1)	Routine Inspections of Places of Public Entertainment ...	226
(2)	Specific Inspections of Places of Public Entertainment ...	38
(3)	Routine Inspections of Hospitals, Nurses' Homes, Homes for for the Aged and Institutions	148
(4)	Specific Inspections of Hospitals, Nurses' Homes, Homes for the Aged and Institutions	60
(5)	Routine Inspections of Industrial, Commercial and Public Buildings	473
(6)	Specific Inspections of Industrial, Commercial and Public Buildings	601
(7)	Routine Inspections of Children's Homes and Schools ...	29
(8)	Specific Inspections of Children's Homes and Schools ...	11
(9)	Routine Inspections of Education Department Premises ...	257
(10)	Specific Inspections of Education Department Premises ...	138
(11)	Cinema Firemen Interviewed	17
(12)	Occasional Licences in conjunction with Police	45
(13)	Annual Licences in conjunction with Police	25
(14)	Inspections under Licensing Act, 1964	97
(15)	Inspections under Pet Animals Act, 1951	30
(16)	Inspections under Housing Act, 1961	150
(17)	Inspections under Factories Act, 1961, Section 40	231
(18)	Inspections under Public Health Act, 1936, Section 60 ...	32
(19)	Inspections under Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963	581
(20)	Inspections of Fireman's Switches on Neon Signs	111
(21)	Lectures and Drills	232
(22)	Fire Investigations	33
(23)	Specific Inspections of Domestic Property	22
(24)	Specific Inspections of Military Establishments	5
(25)	Inspections of Plans for New Buildings	221
(26)	Fire Research Reports compiled for Home Office	5
(27)	Photographic Section:	
	Number of occasions photographs taken	42
	Number of photographs	270

The full effect of the increased responsibilities allocated to the Fire Prevention Department has been felt during the past year and the reorganisation referred to in my Report last year has been completed and is now in operation.

Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963

The fire provisions of this Act came into operation on the 1st August, 1964 and, as expected, a number of administrative and practical problems soon became apparent, especially in the initial stages when large numbers of registrations were received daily together with a steady stream of both verbal and written queries on the fire provisions of the Act and the legal obligations involved.

A total of 6,881 premises have already been registered and the owners or occupiers of 1,430 of these have applied for the necessary means of escape certificates as required under Section 29 of the Act.

Since the 1st August, 1964, 581 inspections have been carried out and this includes 339 premises for means of escape certification. 55 Certificates have been issued, another 37 are completed awaiting issue and 247 premises have certain requirements to complete before certification can be recommended. However, statistical evidence in terms of numbers of inspections does not give an adequate indication of the volume of work involved. Premises may be large multi-occupancy blocks, departmental stores or smaller office, shop and warehouse buildings. Many of the older blocks in the congested sections of the City centre present complicated escape problems and, in some instances, the co-operation of adjoining owners and occupiers has been sought in order to find a common answer. It is gratifying to report that co-operation and understanding is being readily given in most instances. In some cases, structural alterations are necessary to provide a reasonable degree of safety and I should like to place on record my appreciation of the technical assistance given by the Building Surveyors of the City Engineer's Department.

Factories Act, 1961

The work of certifying premises for adequate means of escape under Section 40 of the above Act has continued. This duty is carried out jointly with the City Engineer's (Building Surveyors) Department. New buildings, alterations and extensions to existing premises mean that new applications are being regularly received.

A total of 76 certificates have been issued during the year, a further 8 have been completed and are awaiting issue and 37 premises have to complete requirements before certificates can be issued. This work has necessitated a total of 231 visits. Here again, a statement of numbers is not a clear indication of the work involved. During the year, some of the larger factory premises have been certified and it is now policy to deal with both Factories Act and Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act certificates at the same time where premises are within the meaning of both Acts; for example one large factory involved the issue of 16 certificates under Section 40 of the Factories Act and 19 certificates under Section 29 of the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act.

The use and storage of hazardous materials and dangerous processes is increasing in industrial premises and factory owners have continued to request advice on these matters. Some of the problems involve legal requirements and a close liaison is being maintained with H.M. Factory Inspectorate.

During the year, 140 visits of this type were made and 40 of these involved matters subject to legislation.

Housing Acts, 1961 and 1964

A total of 150 inspections of houses in multiple occupation have been completed during the year. These involved 69 initial surveys and 81 follow up visits to check on the progress of work and to give assistance to contractors and occupiers.

43 notices requiring the provision of satisfactory means of escape have been served. 31 of these involved fairly major alterations and in the remaining 12 cases the requirements were of a more minor nature.

Initial inspections are now made jointly with Building Surveyors (City Engineer's Department). This tends to reduce the number of necessary visits to individual premises and saves time in assessing the situation.

The completion of work still tends to proceed slowly, especially where major building alterations are necessary but this is frequently due to difficulties in obtaining suitable labour and materials.

Places of Public Entertainment

Regular inspections of all cinemas and theatres in the City have continued. Full surveys are carried out jointly by Fire Prevention Officers, Police Officers and Building Surveyors prior to the issue of the Annual Licences. In order to maintain the high standard of safety achieved, Fire Prevention Officers visit each cinema and theatre every month during performances so that the safety standards can be checked during actual working conditions.

On 38 occasions during the year, visits were made to inspect specific safety problems which had arisen, e.g. dangerous acts, the use of real flame on stages, the production of smoke and other stage effects which could create a fire hazard.

The tented structure erected on the Devonshire Street site for the production of "Cinerama" was carefully checked prior to opening and routine visits made at regular intervals.

45 premises were jointly visited with the City Police in connection with the issue of annual and occasional licences for amateur productions of stage plays and for Music, Singing and Dancing Licences. The safety standards in such premises have shown a marked improvement during the past few years; this is due to revised licensing conditions and the fact that official visits have resulted in an increased awareness of the common sense need for reasonable precautions whenever large numbers of people are crowded together in one building.

Last year I commented upon certain premises operating under the cloak of privacy, so called musicians' clubs, jazz clubs, bingo halls, etc., which are open to "members only." The situation has not changed and I doubt if it has improved: fire is no respecter of persons whether the occupants are "private members" or not. Admission limits, exit checks, clear gangways, adequate lighting, etc. do not apply in such premises; this is a serious loophole in the laws controlling safety. Some club managements do ask for advice on fire safety but, where the necessary action involves time and expense, the desire for financial reward frequently outweighs the need to set a reasonable standard of safety.

Licensing Act, 1964

33 applications for the grant of new licences, the upgrading of existing licences or permission to carry out structural alterations to premises already licensed were received during the year. In one instance, a residential hotel, objections were made because the means of escape and other safety precautions were not satisfactory. The objections were withdrawn when the applicant gave an undertaking in Court to complete the work before the premises were used for licensed purposes.

In 7 other cases, the applicants agreed to implement safety requirements such as the provision of emergency lighting, exit signs, smoke stop doors and fire equipment and the need for making formal objections was thus avoided. Subsequent inspections revealed that all the necessary work had been completed satisfactorily.

Plans of new premises for which applications for provisional licences had been received were inspected and the safety requirements were made known to the developers. Complete agreement was reached in all cases and no objections were made.

One new club has been issued with a Registration Certificate and 45 registrations have been renewed. Where clubs have registered for two consecutive years, they have been granted 10 year certificates and, consequently, the number of clubs applying for registration is being reduced each year; only 21 existing clubs will require re-registration in the coming year.

All clubs must adhere to reasonable standards of fire safety before registration is approved but, unlike many places of public assembly, they are not subjected to regular inspection by either Police or Brigade personnel. The continuance of the safety standards achieved immediately following the initial registration is largely a matter for club managements but one wonders how much interest is being maintained in this vitally important aspect of management. The need for ensuring that exits are always clear of obstructions and to keep the number of persons within reasonable limits of safety are elementary factors, but there has been some indication that these points are rarely considered and, as stated previously, fire is no respecter of persons.

General Duties

There has been no reduction in the routine work of inspecting hospitals, institutions and public buildings.

Requests for lectures and film shows on fire safety matters and fire drills have increased considerably and the 232 visits of this type were attended by nearly 6,000 persons.

In last year's report, I referred to the one day course on the use and maintenance of portable extinguishers organised by the Department for the members of the Sheffield and District Industrial and Commercial Fire Prevention Association. Following this course, a request was received to repeat it at some future date and this was arranged in January and February this year. Fifteen one day courses were given and 178 persons from 20 firms, 6 Corporation Departments, 4 Military Establishments and the City Police attended. Many expressions of appreciation have been received on the success of this second course and another 178 persons are now well qualified to take the correct action should fire occur on their premises. This is a valuable contribution in the fight to reduce the mounting losses from fire.

7. Administration

The revised net expenditure of the Brigade for the year ended 31st March, 1965 is £294,586, as against the original estimate of £284,607. The increase is due mainly to the new pay scales which came into operation from the 1st August, 1964.

8. Transport

A total of 664 jobs were carried out in the Brigade Workshops during the year 529 being for the Regular Brigade and 135 for the Auxiliary Fire Service.

I am pleased to report there have been no serious motor accidents.

9. Communications

Discussions are proceeding with Home Office and the Chief Constable with regard to the Brigade having a separate wireless scheme. The present scheme is operated jointly with the Police and although liaison is excellent, there are now many occasions on which both services can claim priority. Both the number of Police and Fire Brigade Mobile Wireless sets are likely to increase during the next two or three years—the joint figure is at present 73—and the problems of sharing the joint scheme will thereafter increase.

If it is agreed that an independent scheme is justified, it is hoped to share the Police Wireless Station at Wesley Towers which offers good cover over most of the City.

10. Visits to Fire Stations

There has been no diminution in the number of parties visiting the Central Fire Station, Fire Station No. 2, Darnall Road and Fire Station No. 4, Mansfield Road.

Demands for training from the Boy Scouts and similar organisations have increased and at times it has been difficult to fit them all in.

11. Annual Inspection

The Annual Inspection of the Brigade was carried out by Mr. W. E. Norwood, M.B.E., H.M. Inspector of Fire Services from the 10th to the 12th August, 1964.

12. Sports and Welfare

The Group Life Insurance Scheme, arranged by the Sports and Welfare Association for its members and which came into effect early in 1964, very soon proved its value when, most unfortunately, a serving member of the Brigade died in September last and his widow received the death benefit of one thousand pounds. It is hoped that it is a very long time, if ever, before it becomes necessary to pay this benefit again, as the insurance is restricted to serving members only, but the scheme represents excellent value for money and is an important aspect of welfare for members of the Brigade.

The "Old Comrades' Association", suggested in last year's Annual Report, subsequently came into being and is now well established under the title of "The Sheffield Fire Services Association", with a membership of over two hundred. The inaugural Annual Dinner was held in February last and was an immediate success.

The Association continues to provide facilities for a swimming club and football, but competitive cricket has had to be discontinued due to difficulties with shift systems, a normal cricket match extending over two different shifts of men. The use of a fishing pond at Barlborough has been acquired for the Angling Section and has been well stocked with fish so that the rod and line men are looking forward to the forthcoming season with great pleasure.

13. Industrial and Commercial Fire Prevention

The Sheffield and District Industrial and Commercial Fire Prevention Association enrolled four new members during the year bringing total membership now to sixty-one. This figure does not, of course, give a true picture of the number of factories or other premises within the Association, it very often being the case that a member firm controls four or five separate factories and a commercial concern many branches, so that the number of premises actually covered by the Association is a very appreciable one.

The interest now being shown in fire prevention by the Sheffield Productivity Council could be expected to attract new members bringing the target figure of one hundred member firms a little nearer. Even so, this Association is one of the largest in the country and certainly one of the most active. It is fair to say that the Sheffield Association has set a lead, at least in this part of the country, in this type of Association and a number of requests have been made by Fire Brigades in the North of England for details of the organisation in preparation for starting similar Associations in their own areas. At least two Brigades have used the Sheffield and District Rules as a basis for their own fire prevention associations and have made rapid progress since their inauguration.

At the first of the Quarterly Meetings held during the year, a talk and discussion period was given exclusively to the requirements of the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963 and, at another meeting, a Senior Fire Officer talked to members about incidents likely to occur when the Brigade responds to a fire call on factory or business premises. Requests for copies of printed notes on these talks were received from a number of member firms.

The One-Day Course of Instruction on the Use, Care and Maintenance of fire extinguishers referred to earlier in my report proved extremely successful and expressions of appreciation were received from many member firms.

The Annual Competitions were held, once again, at the Niagara Sports Ground but the number of entries for the various events was much less than in previous years. Works Fire Brigades, as such, seem to be dwindling rapidly and some Industrial Brigades of very long standing have disappeared over the past year. This decline is not at all confined to this area; most Industrial Fire Brigades' Associations report a severe falling off in the number of organised Works Brigades with a consequent drop in attendances at the various Competitions.

Well over two hundred guests were attracted to the Association's Annual Dinner and the function was graced by the presence of the Lord Mayor, Alderman A. Smith, J.P.

14. Auxiliary Fire Service

The Strength of the Auxiliary Fire Service as at March 31st, 1965 was as follows:—

Men	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	106
Women	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	26
									<hr/>
									132
									<hr/>

Of this total 68 men and 18 women have passed the proficiency test and are serving a three year engagement.

Exercises

During the past year 13 Regional and 6 Sub Regional exercises have been organised.

A 'Rough-it' exercise took place during May, 1964 at Gatebeck Camp, Westmorland; the object being to train personnel in the improvisation of accommodation under emergency conditions utilising only standard equipment carried on appliances.

A convoy run to Redesdale camp, Otterburn was held over a three day period during August, 1964. The aim was to exercise in convoy assembly, control, and movement over long distance; and liaison with various police authorities en route, through the Regional Police Commander (designate) of No. 2 Region.

Training

Due to the Lancashire County Fire Brigade having taken over Washington Hall Camp, Chorley, accommodation and facilities have become somewhat limited. However regular use of the camp has been made one weekend of every month and the high standard of instruction maintained.

Courses in Communications and vehicle recovery and instruction to mechanics and Despatch Riders were regular features together with normal standard training and "out of camp" exercises.

Awards

Her Majesty the Queen was graciously pleased to award the British Empire Medal to Auxiliary Station Officer F. Claude Toplis in recognition of his services and Auxiliary Station Officer H. Parkin and Auxiliary Fireman A. Hargreaves were both awarded the Civil Defence Long Service Medal.

Courses

One Leading Fireman, One Leading Firewoman, one Fireman and two Firewomen attended one week courses at the Home Office Fire Service Training Centre at Moreton-in-Marsh during the past year.

15. Conclusion

May I once again offer my thanks to you, Mr. Chairman, and Gentlemen, for your continued guidance and support; to the other Chief Officers of the Corporation for their advice and assistance; and to the members of the Brigade and Civilian Staff and Workpeople for their loyalty to me.

I have the honour to be, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

B. JONES,
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER