

Sheffield Fire Brigade

This book was researched and written in 1968/69 the main part by Sub-Officer K.L. Mettam

Sheffield Fire Brigade

A brief History issued in 1969 to commemorate its centenary

Price three shillings

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Foreword

I should like to take this opportunity to place on record my appreciation of the assistance I have always received from the Chairman and members of the Engineering Services Committee.

May I also thank the members of the former Fire Brigade Committee and in particular Alderman H. Redgate, J.P., who was Chairman for some sixteen years.

A word of thanks also to those members of my staff who went to considerable trouble in searching old Brigade records, minutes books and archives so that this little book could be prepared. A great deal of interesting material was discovered which, unavoidably, does not appear.

I am grateful to those ex-members of the Brigade who kindly loaned some of the old photographs.



Fire Brigade Headquarters, Chief Fire Officer
Division Street

Early History

Until the beginning of the 18th Century, Sheffield had no fire fighting equipment except a few "*leathern buckets*" which were hung in the Chancel of the Church and in the Town Hall.



"Leather Buckets"- kept in the Church and Town Hall for fire-fighting purposes

Water for fire fighting in those days was provided in a most unusual way. Records show that a William Barker lived in Balm Green in 1379. In 1434 steps were taken to make some sort of reservoir for storing water from the many springs running down from the hills surrounding Balm Green. This reservoir was situated on approximately the same site as the City Hall at the top of Balm Green and became known as Barker's Pool. In 1572 Robert Rollynson who appeared to be a public benefactor, made extensive alterations to this "Pool" by erecting a wall around it, and providing sluice gates. When these were opened water was allowed to run down channels in the middle of the streets. The water could be used to cleanse the streets as well as for fire fighting in conjunction with the leather buckets.

In the Burgery Accounts for 1620 there is an entry which states "To Thomas Wheelwright for dressing buckets 1/6d" proving that someone attended to these items. The 1/6d appears to be an annual fee because it was paid for a number of years.

The earlier types of fire bucket were made solely of leather and were sewn with leather thongs. The seams were "caulked" with pitch and the dressing done by Thomas Wheelwright meant that an inspection of the seams and the application of pitch were necessary. In 1697, 2/6d was paid to Nathaniel Mearls for "Kitts" (small buckets) when the bakehouse was on fire.

The earliest known example of a fire pump was used by the Greeks in 300 B.C. The use of this device was lost in the Middle Ages and was not recovered until the 16th century. The earliest pump to be used on fires in this country was in the form of a squirt. It was designed to direct a jet of water onto a fire, and was constructed in the form of a syringe, the body being held by two men whilst the third forced home the plunger.

However, it was not until the Great Fire of London in 1666 that the necessity for more efficient fire fighting apparatus was realised in this country and in 1667 the establishment of Insurance Fire Brigades brought about a greatly increased development of manual pumps which required relays of men to keep their tank full of water.

In the year 1703 the Town Trustees purchased their first fire engine and organised men to operate it. It was housed in an old building on the north side of the Chancel of the Parish Church, and was occasionally taken out for a practice at the cost of one shilling with another shilling for filling the engine with water when "played".



A hand drawn, manually operated fire engine, provided by Messrs. J. T. and W. Wilson., for use in their Snuff Mills. The base contained water, kept filled by bucket chain, and the two transverse poles were operated up and down by volunteers. Two pistons inside the upright box were thus made to pump water through leather hose connected to the coupling at the front

According to the Burgery Accounts for 1704 the sum of 10s 0d was paid to one William Frost, being his annual wage for cleaning and maintaining the fire engine. The payment was made again in the following year but it was stated that this would be the last time it would be made,

In 1714 an Engine House was built at a cost of £22 12s 9d and 5s 6d was paid out in 1718 for ale money to the foreman on the using of the fire engine.

For nearly 40 years little is recorded about the activities of the fire engine. Either Sheffield was very lucky or the fires that did occur were not serious enough to be mentioned in official reports: but it must be kept in mind that the population of Sheffield at this time was less than 10,000.

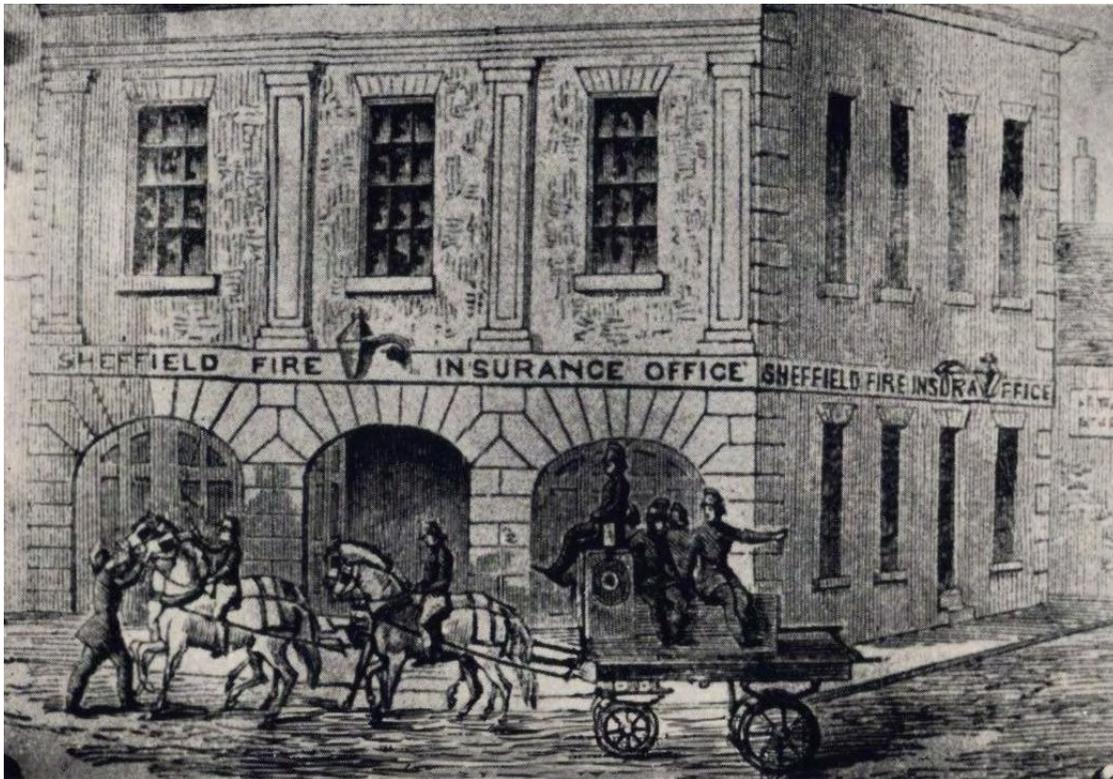
In 1759 repairs were carried out to the Fire Engine and equipment by one Aeran Loton at a cost of £21 14s 7d. In 1760 one shilling was paid for the levelling of the causeway in front of the engine house. In 1784 the Town decided that a new fire engine was needed and one was purchased from Messrs. Hadley & Sons at the cost of £45 17s 0d plus 4s 0d carriage from Tinsley! The first Fire insurance was taken out in Sheffield in 1790 and in 1800 the Royal Exchange and the Phoenix Fire Insurance Companies paid £20 and £21 respectively to the Town Council towards the upkeep of the Fire Brigade.

In 1804 the Town Council paid £15 15s 0d to the Water Company for the use of water and fire plugs for one year. Perhaps because of increasing costs the Town Council, on the 14th February, 1805 said that in future the Town Trustees would not pay for the expense of the fire engine attending fires, but that the persons on whose property the fire occurred would be liable for the charge. Indeed, a Mr. John Furniss was asked to pay 30s 0d for the attendance of the engines and firemen at his premises when on fire. Following this rather drastic measure it was then resolved that the Insurance Companies should be asked to take over part of the responsibility by making an allowance towards the upkeep of the service and payment of the Firemen's Wages: and eventually on the 27th February, 1807 the Town's Fire Engines were presented to the Directors of the Birmingham Fire Office who undertook to keep them in repair and employ men to work them.

The Council also recommended that the inhabitants should encourage that Office by giving it preference in any insurances they had to place. Firemen were to attend all fires but when the premises were not insured with the Birmingham Fire Office the occupier had to defray the expenses.

In 1808 the Sheffield Fire Office was established in George Street, a Mr. Staniforth being appointed as foreman. In addition to this a Fire Engine and Escape were kept at the Town Hall and a portion of the Police Force were organised into a Brigade under Superintendent Otter. Within a very short time the Liverpool and London and Globe Insurance Office opened up a Fire Station in Norfolk Street, a Mr. Richardson being the foreman. Then the Royal Fire and Life insurance Company established a Station in Bank Street, with Mr. Thomas Holmes as foreman. At a meeting at the Town Hall on the 18th April, 1811 it was agreed that the Birmingham Fire Office be at liberty to station one of their engines at Attercliffe, the insurances effected there to be considered as Sheffield insurances.

Sheffield Fire Office, established in George Street, 1808





Fire Marks

Insurance Brigades

"Fire Marks" were attached to the insured building and these enabled the Insurance Brigades to identify the property insured by their Company. Sometimes several Brigades would attend a fire and having found out (by means of the fire mark) with which Company the building was insured, the rival Brigades would either return to their stations, or in some cases actively obstruct the Brigade who were attempting to put out the fire; as for example, by cutting the hose. The fighting between Brigades very often led to persons insuring their property with more than one Company to make sure that any fire would be extinguished by one or other of the Brigades.

One Insurance Company had an advertisement which stated that they would attend fires in Sheffield whether the property was insured by them or not. This Company seems to have realised that fire does not discriminate between properties and the other companies soon appreciated that they must work together, as is well illustrated by the following article taken from the Sheffield Daily Telegraph for Thursday, May 7th, 1868.

"The destructive fire, the details of which we recorded in the Telegraph yesterday morning, was discovered by Charles Butler, night Cabman to the Sheffield Carriage Company, who was standing with his cab in Angel Street at two o'clock. Having ascertained where the fire was, he instantly roused the people in the adjacent houses, and then ran to one of the Fire Offices. Had it not been for his promptness we should doubtless have had to record the loss of life as well as property.

The first engine on the scene was the "Royal" which was speedily set going, and poured a stream into the first floor by the window; but so fierce was the fire that for some time the water was quite powerless in subduing it. The Alliance engine quickly followed, and with a hose, ran up the passage, attacked the fire in the rear, and here, as in the front, the body of water was quite inadequate to the body of the fire. On the arrival of the Liverpool and London engine the exertions of the Royal were aptly supported in front, while the Alliance succeeded in checking the spread of the flames at the back.



A large engine of the period 1868

For a time the three engines continued to work with steadiness, but still the fire burned with fury, threatening the contiguous buildings. After the most praiseworthy exertions, on the part of the three Brigades, the force of the flames in the lower part of Mr Tasker's shop was somewhat reduced but, as if in mockery of all attempts at subjugation, the fire broke out with redoubled fury in the upper storey, at which elevation neither strength of water nor power of engine could reach it. For considerable time it blazed with destructive and unchecked force, but when a large engine belonging to the Royal was brought upon the scene, a strong and continuous stream of water reached the upper storey and effectively suppressed it.

By three o'clock the fire was under control, and shortly after completely extinguished. Though the attempts of the firemen to circumscribe the area of the destruction were, under the circumstances marvelously successful, the premises of Messrs. Coker, Shaw and Robertshaw were more or less damaged both by fire and water. It is gratifying to be able to record that by the timely warning which was given the people who were sleeping in adjacent houses got safely out, and found a comfortable refuge in the Angel Inn.

From what we can learn, we understand that the fire originated in a fireplace in connection with a newly erected machine in the back shop, and communicated with the room above, which was stored with combustible material. The loss sustained by Mr. Tasker has been estimated at £4,000 which is only partly covered by insurance. The property is insured in the Alliance and Sun Fire Offices".



1869 - 1895
Superintendent John Charles Pound

In 1869 the Sheffield Council after much negotiation took over the responsibility for fire cover from the Insurance Brigades. The Council advertised for a Chief Fire Officer and by June of that year, thirty-seven applications had been received. From these six were selected for the short list:

Thomas Wingfield	Metropolitan Fire Brigade
John Charles Pound	Nottingham Fire Brigade
Thomas Austin	Blackburn
Thomas J. Holmes	Royal Fire Brigade, Sheffield
E. Clements	Birkenhead
Henry Millward	Alliance Fire Office, Sheffield

After they had been interviewed Mr. John Pound was appointed Superintendent of the Brigade as from the 15th July, 1869, at a salary of £100 per year, a house, coal and gas to be provided for his use. Perhaps the decision of the Corporation to take over and run the Fire Brigade was brought to a head by a series of large fires namely:

25th March, 1865 The Surrey Theatre. West Bar

3rd March, 1867 Mr. Burrells, Draper. Snig Hill

11th May, 1869 The Ragged Schools

13th May, 1869 Mudfords Rope Works, Exchange Street

The first Fire Station was in Norfolk Street opposite Milk Street. Mr. Pound had to form the new Brigade with 15 young constables and for eleven months living quarters were a problem as many of the men lived as far away as Spital Hill. When a fire occurred at night the men were called off their beats by whistle, and in the daytime Mr. Pound had to pick up any Constable he could find. The first fire attended by the new Brigade occurred on the 30th July, 1869 at a Cabinet Case Makers in Arundel Street. It took fifty minutes to obtain water because the fire occurred on the day before the Corporation required the Water Company to give a constant supply. Towards the latter end of the year the water was again turned off at night and so Mr. Pound insisted on a turncock being in attendance at the Fire Station to turn on the water in case of fire.

In 1870 the Corporation took a lease of 17 houses in Hill Street and Balm Green and the Firemen were installed in them, electric bells being connected to the houses. On the 24th June, 1870, the appliances were moved to a new Station at Barker's Pool, which was formerly the Weights and Measures Office. In 1874 Hose Carts and fire extinguishing apparatus were placed in each of the four Divisional Police Stations at Attercliffe, Broomhill, Highfields and Langsett Road. For four years after its inception the Brigade had to drag the engines by hand as it was not possible to obtain horses from the Angel yard in Angel Street in any reasonable time. On the 20th September, 1873 a call was received to a fire at Fulwood and the Brigade had to wait 45 minutes for the horses. Before they were able to start an Alderman and several reporters came to the Station and the next day there was a long report in the press. After the next Council meeting two horses were purchased but there was no stabling for them and they had to stand in the yard of the Angel Inn at Moorhead; but eventually a 10 years' lease of a stable and coach house in Backfields was obtained

In 1876 the Corporation purchased its first Steam Engine and on the 25th December, 1883 the Brigade removed to a new Fire Station at Rockingham Street which had been erected at a cost of £16,318.



Horse drawn steamer outside new fire station Rockingham Street



Captain Pound and members of Brigade with two horse drawn steam pump fire engines, 1894

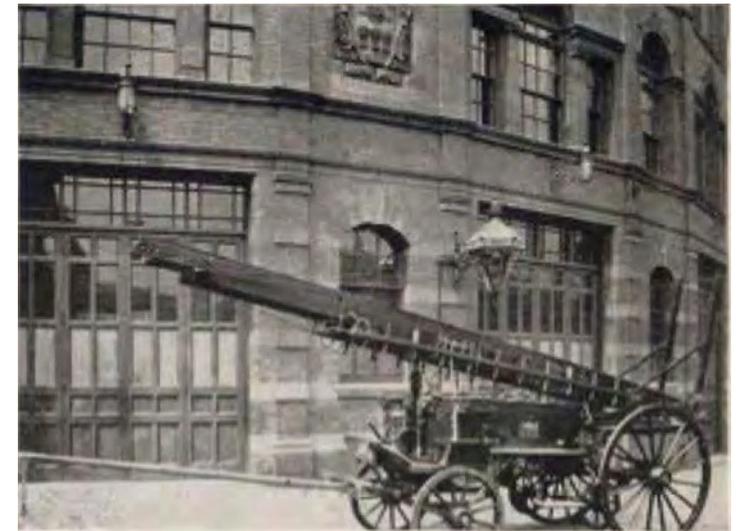


Fire escape pitched at the front of Rockingham Street Fire Station

The second Steam Engine was purchased in 1884 and in 1894 another manual engine was replaced by a steamer. In 1895 five Kingston Fire Escapes were purchased and placed at each of the Divisional Police Stations. At this time the establishment of the Brigade was one Superintendent, one Sergeant, three engineers and 15 Firemen.

The appliances consisted of three steam fire engines, one manual engine, two tenders, three telescopic fire escapes and one escape carried on a four wheeled tender and pulled by five horses. Each of the Divisional Police Stations had a fire escape and hose cart.

Superintendent Pound retired from the Fire Brigade in 1895.



Typical horse drawn fire escape outside West Bar Fire Station

1895-1915 — Superintendent William Frost



Following Superintendent Pound's retirement Mr. William Frost was appointed Superintendent in Charge of the Brigade, after service in Brigades in Leicester, Northampton and Lancashire. Mr. Frost in the first year of appointment introduced one innovation. This was the provision of a swinging snap harness for the horses and the training of the latter to answer a call of their own accord.



Swinging snap harness for horses, introduced by Supt. Frost. Horses can be seen in stalls at rear of fire engine ready to move into position where alarm bells sounded

Immediately the alarm bells were sounded the horses standing ready in their stalls went and took their places in front of the appliances and one action sufficed to bring the harness into place and fasten it. This enabled the Brigade to turn out very quickly.

Mr. Frost, in his first report, said that he did not feel the equipment of the Brigade would be complete until he had alarm boxes fixed at various points in the suburbs of the City. He also said that much time would be saved in receiving a call "if the larger works and shops had a wire and electric bell direct to the Station". In 1896 various items of equipment were purchased and a 45 ft. fire escape was stationed at Moorhead instead of at the Fire Station.

On November 9th 1896, a ladder of flexible steel was tested as a fire escape. It is not known if it passed its test or not but here were the beginnings of awareness of alternative ways of escape in case of fire. In his report for 1899 Superintendent Frost reiterated his recommendations about the alarm boxes in the suburbs of the City.

In 1900 the new Fire Station on West Bar was opened. The new building also provided for the Police a Charge Office. Search Room, Telephone Room, Inspector's Office and four cells.

The engine house was built on three levels because of the gradient. This building was an improvement on the Chief Station at Rockingham Street. When a fire call was received at Rockingham Street. the horses being stabled opposite the engine house had to trot across the yard and turn round before being harnessed. At West Bar this turning by horses was done away with.



Exterior view West Bar Fire Station

Accommodation was for three engines, and behind each engine were two stalls with horses continually ready although a change of horses took place periodically. Upon a fire call being received a cord was pulled opening the street and the stable doors. The horses then ran along each side of the machine and into position for the harness. This was suspended from the ceiling to enable it to be lowered onto the horses. There were no straps or buckles and firemen locked the snap collars into position. At the rear of the Station was stabling for twelve horses.

In 1902 Mr. Frost stated that the need for an up to date fire alarm system was badly felt by the Brigade. Fifty-three calls had been received by messengers running to Fire Stations during the year. This was obviously a waste of valuable time as every second was of importance at the commencement of a fire and the losses could be still further reduced when fire alarm boxes were fixed near to important risks.

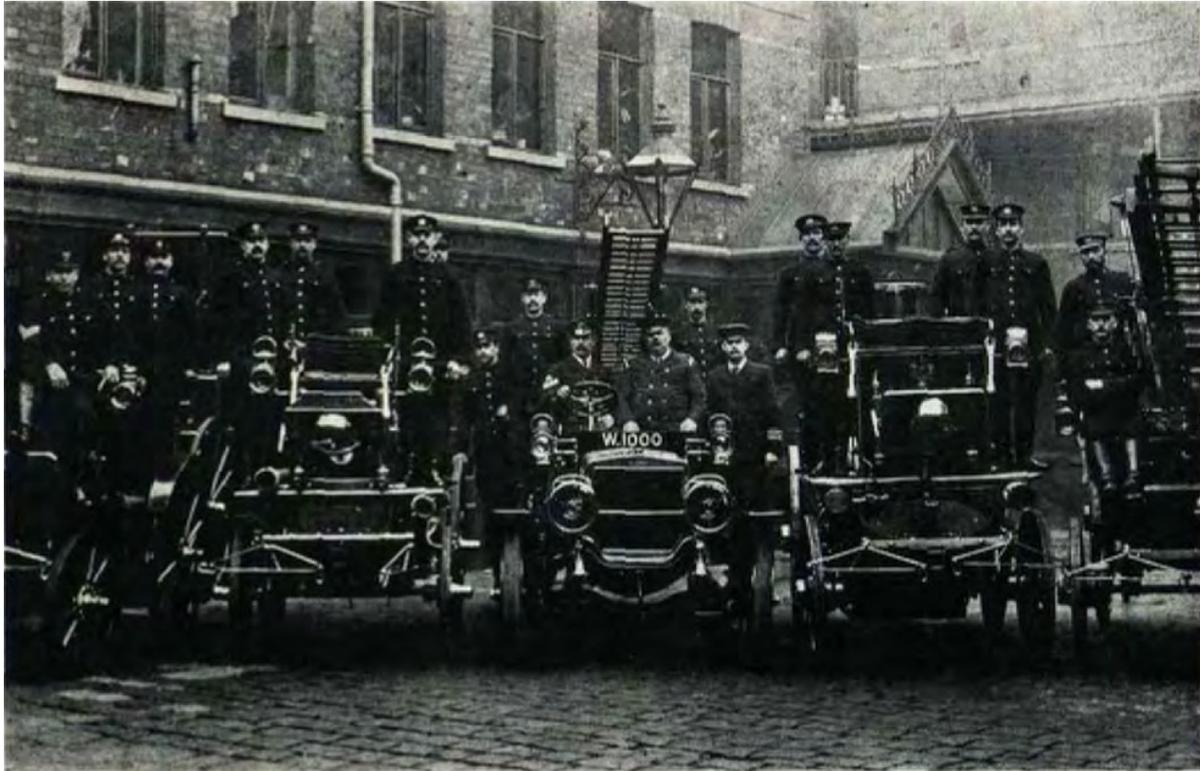
The Chief Officer standing by a steam boiler



horse drawn 75ft turntable escape, made hr "BRAUN" of Germany. was brought into service in 1903, motorised in 1925 and used up to 1928 (See photograph on page 16)



fire ladders were extended by carbon dioxide gas and the fireman can he seen opening the control valve on one of the gas cylinders.



1907 First motor fire engine purchased, registration No. W.1000. The other appliances shown were still horse drawn

In 1903 a new Fire Escape was purchased. The telescopic ladders were extended by an engine fixed at the end and at the side of the main ladder, power being provided by carbonic acid gas which was stored in four cylinders ready for use. This escape was a forerunner of the modern Turntable Ladder, and had many interesting automatic devices attached to it. One of them was an arrangement for throwing the engine out of gear when the ladders were fully extended, the gas escaping from the safety valve fixed on the feed pipe. An indicator was provided on the foot of the ladders showing the height to which it was raised and there was an oil brake for lowering the ladders. A plumbing gear was also incorporated to enable the ladders to be maintained in a perpendicular position irrespective of the position of the carriage. This escape having an engine and two extending ladders was the first of its kind in the Country.

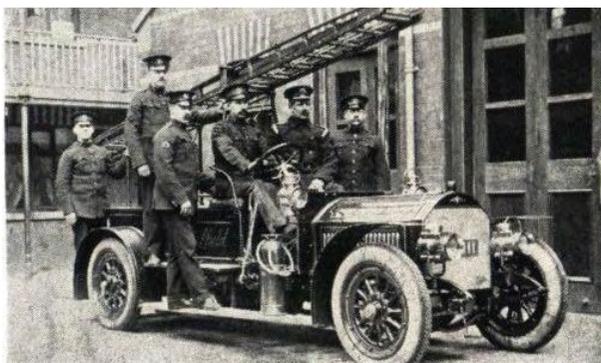
In 1907 the first motor escape was purchased and was an unqualified success, Forty-four fires were attended by this appliance and the Superintendent in his Annual Report stated that its superiority over horses was very marked. The steep gradients were easily negotiated and the scene of the fire was reached in half the time taken by the horses. The engine was started up every few hours both day and night to facilitate turning-out.

By using acetylene gas which was carried already generated and by means of a sparking plug in each lamp the lights on the appliance were lit by turning a switch.



Horse drawn fire engine. at the rear can be seen the pump. Steam to operate the pump was supplied by the boiler.

In 1908 the number of men was increased from 27 to 40. This was brought about by Firemen commencing duty at theatres and a sum of 30/- per week was charged to the theatre proprietors. In 1909 the Superintendent was able to report that the motor escape had done more work than all the other appliances put together; that the loss of life and property had thus, by motor traction, been reduced to a minimum; and that if the record was to be maintained it was necessary that another motor driven appliance be purchased. He said he was very loath to revert to the use of horses



One of the fire engines purchased in 1911 to bring the fleet up to 4 motorised vehicles



The Brigade fleet up to 4 motorised vehicles were now in service

with the first machine and, in fact, he hoped the time was not too far distant when they would be dispensed with entirely, although he felt that with the passing of the horses, the Firemen would have parted with good and faithful friends.

In 1910 a new Motor Fire engine was in fact purchased and placed in commission in December. It had a six-cylinder petrol engine and according to the R.A.C. formula was of 72 horse power. It had a centrifugal pump capable of delivering 450 gallons of water per minute and carried a 36 ft. extending ladder. Also in this year a new apparatus was purchased enabling firemen to enter buildings filled with smoke. It consisted of an oxygen cylinder charged to a pressure of 120 atmospheres. The oxygen was supplied to the fireman's helmet. The exhaled breath was to some extent purified by contact with a regenerator which contained layers of caustic potash. This apparatus proved very useful on the occasion of a cellar fire, when the firemen were able to extinguish a very difficult outbreak by its aid.

**City of Sheffield Fire Brigade
Record of Horses**

Date of Purchase	Name	Age Yrs.	Height		Colour and Description	Sickness				From Whom Purchased	Amount Paid	How Disposed of	Date	Length. of Service	
			Hands	Ins.		Nature of	From	To	Days					Yr	Mont hs.
29.1.01	Bulla	7	16	1	Light Chestnut	Sore shoulder Injured leg caused by catching himself with shoe Blood poisoning Out to grass Physiced	1.7.03 18.3.04	6.7.03 5.4.04	6 19	Mr. Beulah Manager Boots Ltd	£50	Dropped dead in Waingate when returning from a fire at Vickers Ltd. Brightside Lane £1 received from Messrs. J. Young a Son	13.11.13 27.1.14	12	7
13.3.12	Kinton	4			Black Horse	Swelling in neck Cut under chest Swollen chime Lame near hind fetlock	10.6.12 21.6.12 1.10.12 6.10.13	2.7.12 1.9.12 9.10.12 20.10.13	22 11	Frank Lloyd & Sons; Wrexham	£42	Sold to J. W. Milner. Blue Boar Hotel for £25 See Council Minutes. Page 8	21.6.15	3	3
18.3.12	Madge	5			Chestnut Mare					Hobson Bros. £50 Broomhill, Sheffield	£50	Sold to Mr. Milner at West Bar for sum of £24	13.6.12		
18.3.12	Gertie	5	15	3	Roan Mare	Injury to off fore foot Lame offside fore foot	20.4.13 6.6.13	1.5.13 21.6.13	12 16	G. W. Needham. Carterknowle Road	£55	Transferred to Mounted Police Dept 1 st May 1922 for £25	1.5.22	10	1
11.9.15	Monarch	7	16	3	Light bay gelding white mark on off fore fetlock					Mounted Police Dept Formerly purchased by the mounted dept. from John Ross Wagon Proprietor. Hillsborough. 29.11.13	£50	Handed over to Mounted Police Dept.. May 1922 for £25		6	7

Record of Horses – continued

Date of Purchase	Name	Age Yrs.	Height		Colour and Description	Sickness				From Whom Purchased	Amount Paid	How Disposed of	Date	Length. of Service	
			Hands	Ins.		Nature of	From	To	Days					Yr	Mths
13.7.16	Lock	4	16		Light bay gelding					John J. Cartledge. 242. Carterknowle Road for the sum of £52/10	152110	Trans. to Mounted Police Department in lieu of horse "Kruger"	11.12.18		
11.2.18	Kruger	8	16	1	Light chestnut gelding					Transferred from Mounted Police Dept.		Sold to the Improvement Committee for £20	1 1.2.18		

Print shows details of horses in use by the Sheffield Fire Brigade 1901 - 1922



Horse drawn Ambulance 1912, driver and attendant were both firemen



Horse "Gertie" which served with Sheffield Fire Brigade from 1912 to 1922 and was then sold to the Mounted Police.

Two further motor chassis were purchased in 1911, and these were fitted with bodies by members of the Brigade. During the year one horse had died and two had been sold to the Cleansing Department. The remaining four were still in good condition, evidence of the care taken by the Firemen in charge of them. About this time a number of fires were occurring in the Cinemas of the City, mainly through the film being jammed in the gate of the projector.

In 1913 whilst returning with a Steam Fire Engine, from a fire, the chestnut horse "Buller" dropped dead in Waingate. This horse was a handsome animal with a silver mane and tail and was a familiar sight in the City. It was believed that the cause of death was through the bursting of a blood vessel. In 1914 the property adjoining the Fire Station in Rockingham Street was purchased with a view to future extensions and four of the houses were put into good habitable condition and accommodated Firemen. On the outbreak of war in 1914, eight men were recalled to the colours.

Shortly afterwards in 1915 Superintendent William Frost retired.

**1915 to 1923:
Superintendent F. W. Hadwick**



Mr. F. W. Hadwick took over command of the Brigade in 1915. The working strength of the Brigade had been gradually reduced because of the call on manpower for the fighting services, until at one time it was as low as three officers and twenty men.

By 1916 the strength of the Brigade had become so depleted that a number of volunteer Firemen stood by at the two Fire Stations during the evening for the purpose of assisting the Brigade in both fire fighting and ambulance duties.

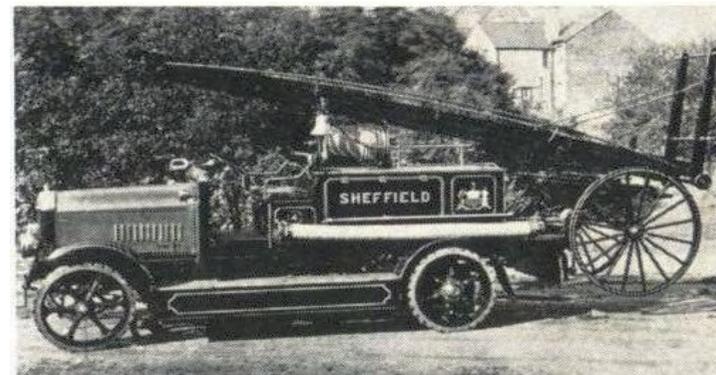
As a further consequence of this depletion and owing further to the possibility of fires being caused in Sheffield by bombs dropped by enemy aircraft all agreements for the attendance of the Brigade out of the City were cancelled and a notice to this effect was sent out on the 23rd February, 1916. It was agreed, however, that the hospitals at Wharncliffe, Longshaw Lodge and Dore would still be protected as long as they continued to be used as military hospitals. On the 26th September, 1916, three fires were started by incendiary bombs dropped from German Zeppelins, two in dwelling houses and one in the Stores of the Great Central Railway at Woodbourn Road where a number of sleepers and timber were destroyed. In November, 1918 the War to end wars was over. After the Armistice was signed, the Brigade gradually regained its normal strength, and on the 29th March, 1919, the volunteers at their own request were relieved from further service. The strength of the Brigade at this time was four Officers and 39 men.

Mr. Hadwick retired in 1923.

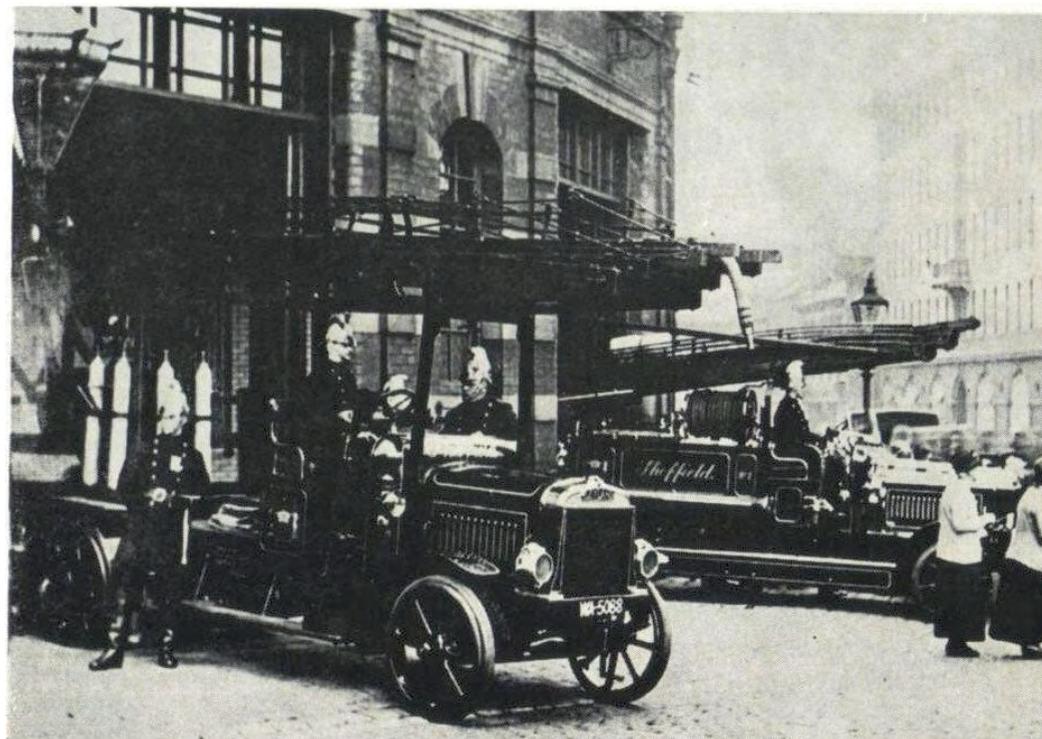
Superintendent T. Breaks 1923 - 1937



Superintendent Breaks was only 32 when he was appointed but full of enthusiasm to build up the Brigade which had inevitably run down through the war years, and because of the stringent economies necessary afterwards. Additional appliances were eventually obtained, and it was finally decided that a new Fire Station at Division Street was necessary.



Motor Pump, also carrying a 50ft Wheeled Escape



1925 fire engine in the foreground carries the gas operated 75 ft. turntable ladder previously carried on a horse drawn appliance

The Brigade was still under the control of the Chief Constable, but Mr. Tom Breaks was appointed Superintendent in charge in 1923. He had first joined the Fire Service at Nottingham in 1911, and after service with the armed forces during the First World War, he returned in 1918 to Nottingham Fire Brigade. In 1919, he was appointed the Chief Officer of the Salford Fire Brigade.



Ceremony of laying foundation stone for new headquarters station in Division Street, 1927

A row of shops fronting Division Street from Rockingham Street to Rockingham Lane was purchased and demolished, plans were prepared, tenders for the building were accepted and in July 1929, the new Headquarters was officially declared open. These provided accommodation in a spacious appliance room for eight pumps including two trailers, a new Turntable Ladder two tenders and Emergency Tender: with married quarters for the Officers and men above.



Division Street Fire Station, officially opened July, 1929

The fire engines of the Brigade about the period 1929 in the yard behind the new station in Division Street.

In the background can be seen the old Rockingham Street Station. On the right of the photograph are the flats for married firemen and their families. The flats shown were part of the old station



Motor Fire Pump 1929





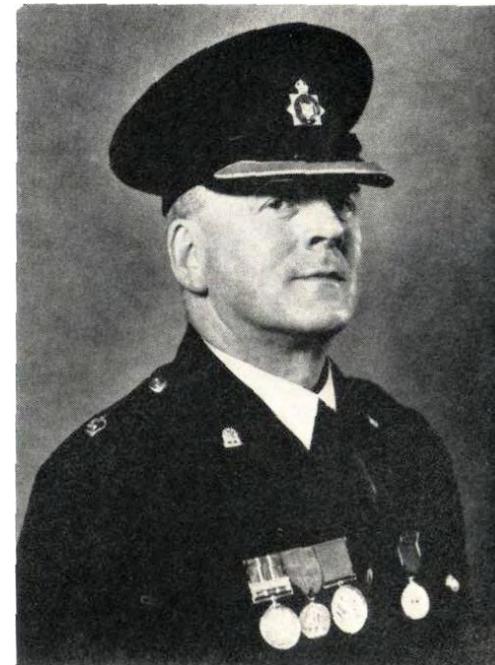
Emergency Tender in service 1934

In April, 1934 a co-ordinated Fire Service throughout the Country was being considered, and the first real step towards this was made in Sheffield. This was the North Derbyshire Joint Fire Brigade Scheme in which the Fire Stations at Sheffield, Rotherham, Dronfield, Chesterfield, and Bakewell took part. It was a start on the right lines, but unfortunately, it was hampered by lack of funds.

In April, 1937, Mr. Breaks was seconded to the Home Office, and was attached to the newly formed Fire Brigades Division as an Inspector of Fire Brigades.

Mr. Breaks was a well known character in the City and attended many fires and special service calls. Perhaps the most notable of these was his capture, single handed, of a tiger which had escaped from its cage on the stage of the Empire Theatre, and after seriously mauling its keeper took refuge in a cellar beneath the stage.

Superintendent C. Teather 1937-1941



Mr. Teather took over Sheffield Fire Brigade in April, 1937 from Mr. Breaks. It was an expanding Brigade that he took charge of.

Because of the housing development that had taken place a single pump Station had been opened on the Manor Estate with the Firemen living in the adjoining Corporation houses, and one fire engine and crew were stationed at the Divisional Police Station at Whitworth Lane, Attercliffe, to provide the first attendance to the fire risks in the steelworks in this area.

The Firemen were now working a two-shift system consisting of eleven hours of day duty, and thirteen hours of night duty with one day off per week. As a result of the Fire Brigades Act 1938 which was based on the recommendations of the Riverdale Committee, the strength of the Sheffield Fire Brigade was increased to 65. During this year also, as a result of the Air Raid Precautions Act 1937, the Auxiliary Fire Service came into being, and volunteers attended weekly training classes with regular Firemen as instructors.

On the outbreak of war in 1939 the Auxiliary Fire Service was embodied and posted to 20 temporary Fire Stations which were opened throughout the City, one regular fireman being attached to each of these stations. At this time there were approximately 500 whole-time and 400 part-time Auxiliary Firemen,

The testing time of the emergency organisation came in December, 1940 with the two heavy enemy attacks on the City. Much damage was done by explosive and incendiary bombs but all members of the Fire Service—both regular and auxiliary—acquitted themselves well.

National Fire Service: 1941-1948

It was decided in view of the heavy air raids that had taken place, to bring the Fire Service under central control and in May, 1941, the Fire Service (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1941, received the Royal Assent. On the 18th August, 1941, the National Fire Service which incorporated the peace-time Brigades and the wartime Auxiliary Fire Service was brought into being for the period of the emergency. Absolute responsibility for the operation and the administration of the Fire Service passed to the Home Office and financial responsibility was assumed by the Government as from the 1st July, 1941, subject to a standard contribution by Local Authorities equal to 75 per cent of the rate levied for peace-time Fire Brigade purposes for the year 1939-1940. Administrative control passed to the Home Office on the 18th August, 1941 and on this date the City of Sheffield Police Fire Brigade

ceased to exist and became part of No. 3 Area of the National Fire Service. Sheffield, along with a small part of the West Riding of Yorkshire formed the "A" and "B" Divisions of this area. Superintendent C. Teather became the Senior Divisional Officer and was attached initially to "B" Division with Headquarters at "Bishopholme", Herries Road, Chief Inspector J. W. Singleton was appointed Divisional Officer of "A" Division. The active strength of personnel within the Area covered by the former Sheffield Brigade and Auxiliary Fire Service at this time was over 1,000 whole-time men and some 250 women with nearly 700 part-time personnel of both sexes. Nearly 300 pumping appliances were available.

The organisation was built up in anticipation of air raids which fortunately did not materialise and the peak strength was nearly 1,300 whole-time personnel and 2,000 part-time. In anticipation of "D" Day numbers of firemen were transferred to coastal areas—particularly the south coast—and immediately afterwards, when it became obvious that the danger of air raids on inland towns had largely passed re-organisation commenced. The Divisions were eliminated and No. 3 Area formed into four Sub-Areas, Sheffield and district becoming Sub Area A.

In 1945 those members of the National Fire Service who had been called up under the provisions of the National Service Acts, were discharged from the service of the Crown and as far as possible many other members were released. Applications were invited for the Post War Fire Service and in 1946 serving members who possessed the necessary qualifications were able to apply for permanent appointment. Many others were recruited from the armed forces.

The Fire Services Act, 1947 made provision to transfer fire fighting functions from the National Fire Service to Fire Brigades maintained by the Councils of Counties and County Boroughs. In anticipation of this, applications were invited from serving members for supervisory posts in the new organisation and Mr. H. J. Reynolds, who was then the Fire Force Commander of the No. 3 Area of the National Fire Service was selected as Chief Fire Officer (designate) by the City Council.

Chief Fire Officer H.J. Reynolds 1948 -1953



On the 1st April, 1948, the City of Sheffield again became a Fire Authority, but with one important difference. Prior to the creation of the National Fire Service, the members of the Brigade were members of the Police Force and its head was a Superintendent who was responsible to the Chief Constable. Now the Chief Fire Officer was directly responsible to the Fire Brigade Committee and through them to the City Council.

There were five Fire Stations in operation in the City, but only the Central Fire Station Division Street, was a permanent Station: the rest were temporary. These temporary Stations were at Darnall Road

Schools, in the old Civil Defence Camp at Norton, in a converted garage at Mansfield Road and in a war-time building at Elm Lane adjoining Cliffe House. The strength of the Brigade was some 156 Officers and men.

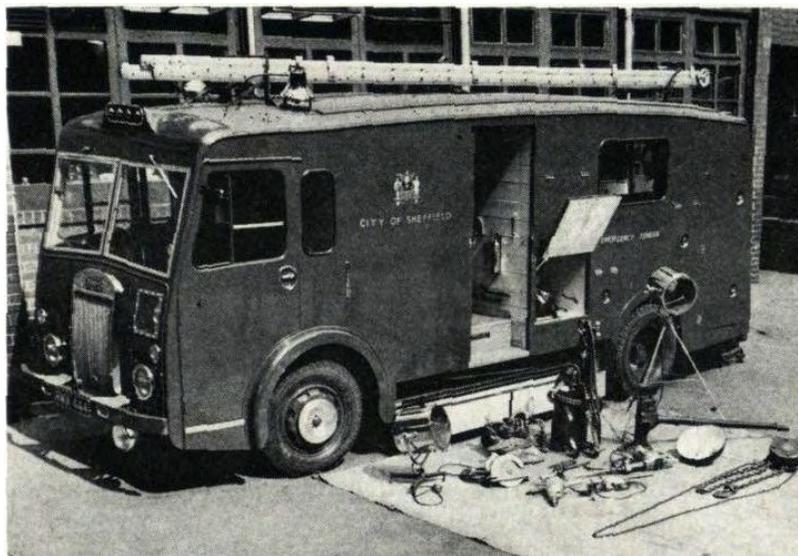
The Fire Services Act 1947 imposed a duty on every Fire Authority to secure efficient arrangements for the giving when requested of advice in respect of buildings or other property as to fire protection; restricting the spread of fires; and means of escape in case of fire. As a consequence of this a small Fire Prevention Department was set up.

In 1949, because of the international situation, the Auxiliary Fire Service was brought into being again and recruiting commenced on the 1st November, 1949.

The response in Sheffield was excellent. Within two years over 200 men and women had been enrolled and trained, and by 1953 the numbers had grown to 360.

Sites were earmarked and plans prepared for the building or adaptation of Fire Stations, but unfortunately there were considerable restrictions on Capital Expenditure. However, in 1951 work commenced on the foundations of the new Fire Station in Darnall Road which was to replace the temporary one at Darnall Road Schools.

Mr. Reynolds having laid the foundations for the new organisation retired in 1953, and was succeeded by Mr. B. Jones, who had been the Assistant Chief Officer.



View of emergency tender showing some of the special equipment carried

**Chief Fire Officer B. Jones, O.B.E.,
1953-1966**



Mr. Benjamin Jones was appointed Chief fire Officer on the 1st October, 1953. He had joined the City and County of Kingston-upon-Hull Fire Brigade in October, 1927, and during the life of the National Fire Service had been transferred to Leeds as a Divisional Officer. He first came to Sheffield in the early part of 1948.

By 1956 the new Fire Station at Darnall Road was completed and was formally opened by the then Home Secretary. In 1957 alterations were carried out to Fire Station No. 5. Elm Lane to bring it more up to date, and the old flats at the rear of the Central Fire Station, Division Street, were demolished.

A block of garages for the Auxiliary Fire Service was erected on part of the land that had thus become available. In 1963, the new Fire Station at



Mansfield Road was completed and the new one at Lowedges Road was opened in 1965. The Brigade then had an excellent set of premises and a fleet of modern well equipped fire appliances

During this time the duties placed upon the Fire Prevention Department by legislation had increased considerably, and the strength of the Department had frequently to be increased. The Auxiliary Fire Service was re-organised during 1962 in order to secure in peace-time sufficient numbers of active and highly trained auxiliaries to help the regular fire service in time of war. The Sheffield contingent was extremely enthusiastic and was considered one of the best in the country. Unfortunately Mr. Jones, who had not been too well in the previous year, died on the 11th January, 1966.



*Sheffield Auxiliary Fire Service
roll call before leaving on convoy
exercise to Edinburgh*

**Chief Fire Officer S. Lambert
1966— present date**



Fire Station No. 6, Queen Street, Mosborough - adopted by Sheffield after boundary extension 1967

New Workshops and Stores, that had been built on land adjoining the Fire Station at Darnall Road were opened in 1967. The Workshops are extremely well equipped to carry out all repairs to fire appliances and vehicles, and the testing of fire pumps; and a full range of items of uniform and other equipment is carried in the Stores.

On the 16th January, 1968, the Prime Minister announced in the House of Commons the Government's decision to place home defence on a "care and maintenance" basis: and as a result of this decision the Auxiliary Fire Service was disbanded and their appliances and equipment returned to the Home Office Stores.

Mr. S. Lambert, who was the Assistant Chief Officer, was selected by the City Council to replace Mr. Jones. He joined the City and County of Kingston-upon-Hull Fire Brigade in 1935 and after holding various appointments during the life of the National Fire Service was transferred to Sheffield in 1948.

In 1967 as a result of the Sheffield Order, 1967, the Fire Station at Queen Street, Mosborough, together with the personnel and appliances was transferred from the Derbyshire County Council to Sheffield.



Workshop interior



Workshops and Stores at Darnall Road 1968

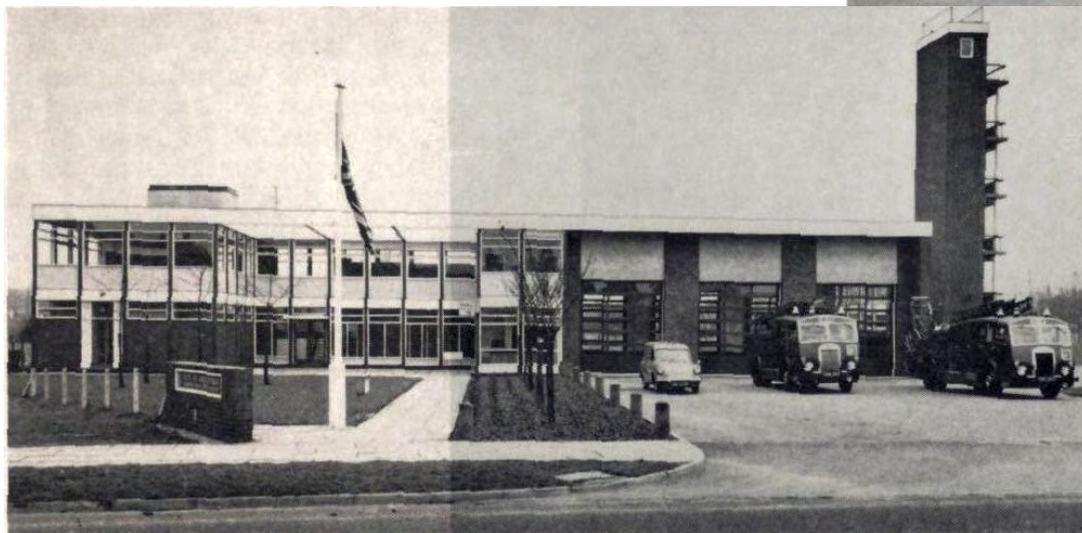
The disbandment in Sheffield was marked by a farewell parade which was addressed by the Lord Mayor Alderman Harold Lambert, in the presence of the Chairman and members of the Fire Brigade Committee. He paid tribute to the voluntary service and public spirit of the members—both men and women—of the Auxiliary Fire Service.

There is now no-one living at the Central Fire Station, and the old flats have been converted into offices for the administrative and fire prevention staffs; lecture rooms; study room; and recreation room. A Mess Room and a modern kitchen have also been provided.



Fire Station No. 2. Darnall Road, built 1956

Central Fire Station and Headquarters, Division Street



Fire Station No. 3, Lowedges Road, built 1965



Fire Station No. 4, Mansfield Road, built 1963

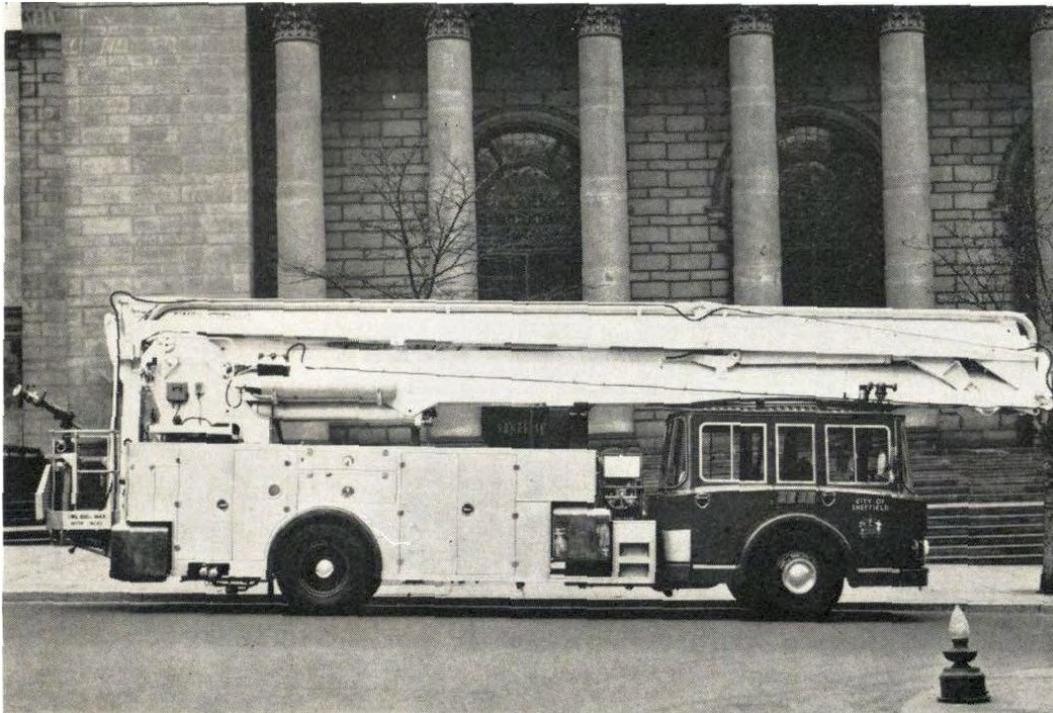


Fire Station No. 5, Elm Lane

The Multiplex telephone and speaker system has been installed. By use of this equipment one or all fire stations can be turned out simultaneously by the staff in the Control Room at Division Street. A fuller description of this system is given under the heading "Control Room."

The building development that has been carried out in the Stanington and South West area of the City, and the increasing traffic congestion made it clear that a new fire station would be required, and this station, in Rivelin Valley Road, was opened during the Summer of 1969.

Comment must also be made on two appliances that have recently been obtained. The first was an 85 ft. Simon Snorkel Hydraulic Platform - delivered in 1968 - and one of the few in the country of this size. This appliance can be used for rescuing several people at a time from high buildings, and can also be used to convey Firemen for fire-fighting purposes to the upper floors without using the staircases. The other was a small Emergency Tender obtained in 1969 which carries special rescue and cutting equipment, particularly for use at road accidents.



85 ft. Hydraulic Platform



Small Emergency Tender



The Watch Room at West, Bar 1900

The two men are firemen wearing the sailor uniform of the period. This was worn when working on the station and at drill

Brigade Control Room during the period 1928-1953



Control Room

The hub of the Fire Brigade is the Control Room manned by a specialist staff of Control Room Attendants throughout the day and night, The Control Room and its operations play a most important part in the speed and efficiency of the Brigade, as it is in this centre, that fire and all types of emergency calls are received. Fire and emergency calls are received in the Control Room by one of the following methods:

- a. 999 system
When the caller dials 999 on either a private or public telephone, the G.P.O. operator asks for the telephone number from which the call is being made and immediately connects the caller to the Fire Brigade Control Room. The Control Room Attendant then obtains the address and details of the incident direct from the caller.
- b. Direct Fire Telephone
These are installed in hospitals and places of public entertainment and provide a direct link with the Fire Brigade in case of fire.
- c. Automatic Fire Alarm System
These are installed in industrial premises, shops and offices, and provide automatically an immediate alarm at the Fire Station in the event of fire. At the present time there are 61 of these connections.
- d. Running Call
This is the term used when a person goes to a fire station and reports a fire. At Fire Stations other than the Central Fire Station a special call box and telephone is provided for this purpose.

When a call is received by any one of these means, the Control Room Attendant turns out fire appliances according to a predetermined attendance; this attendance being dependent on the risk involved and the requirements in each individual case, e.g.

Life Risk

As in the case of hospitals, large hotels, large departmental stores.

High Fire Risk

Type of premises and materials used or stored.

Road, Rail and Aircraft Accidents

A call to such incidents would require an initial attendance of several fire and special rescue appliances—whereas a chimney fire would only require one fire appliance.

Control Room facilities have been improved throughout the years and the City of Sheffield Fire Brigade now has one of the most up to date in the country. All 999 calls and radio messages are recorded automatically on a tape recorder and all administrative telephone calls are made through a Private Automatic Switchboard.

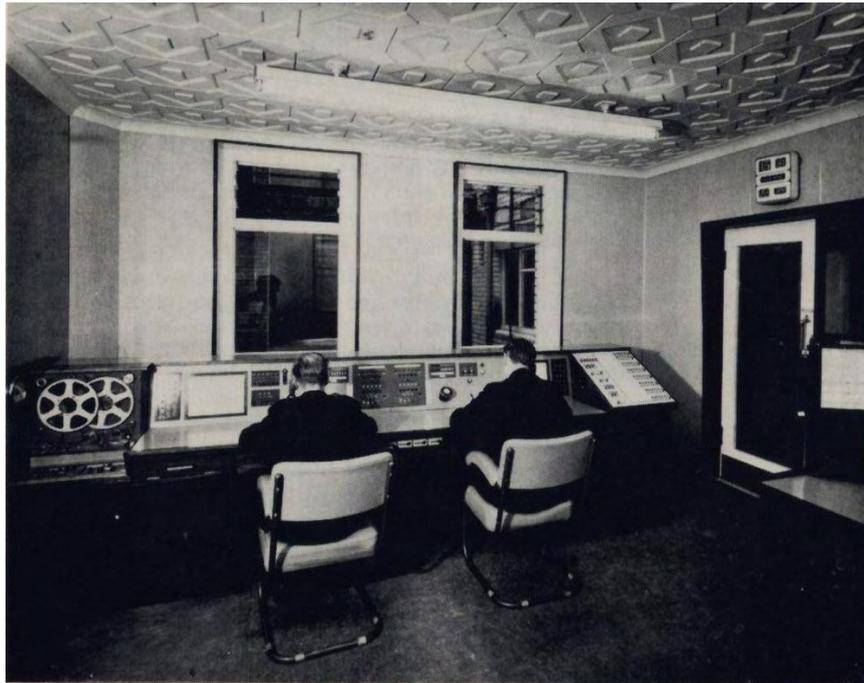
The "Multiplex" system of communication was installed in 1967. This system enables all seven of the Brigade Stations to be communicated with, from the Control Room either individually or collectively and is used to transmit both fire calls and messages to Stations. This has obviated the need to have a Fireman on duty in the Watchroom at sub Stations to receive messages by telephone from Control.

The "Multiplex" system is operated as follows:

When a fire or other emergency call is received in the Control Room, the address and details of the incident are obtained from the caller. A Control Room Attendant ascertains from the Street Schedule the nearest Fire Station to the address given. This information is passed to the Attendant at the "Multiplex" Control Panel who operates the switch for the appropriate Station and presses the "Multiplex" Control Switch.

The operation of this switch causes the following to take place simultaneously at the Station concerned: an alarm is sounded, the appliance room doors are opened and at night the lights are switched on. The Attendant then gives the address and details of the call, the announcement being carried over loud speakers at the Station and heard by all personnel. The appliance then turns out, the whole procedure taking less than thirty seconds to complete.

Brigade Control Room 1953-1966



Brigade Control Room-redesigned 1966

All appliances are fitted with radio and as soon as it is moving the Officer in Charge reports by radio to Control that he is proceeding to the address given. On receipt of this message, the Control Room Attendant operates a second Control Switch on the "Multiplex" Panel which causes the appliance room doors to close and the lights to be switched off at the distant Station.

Should the fire require an attendance from more than one Station, the appropriate switches are operated and the message is transmitted simultaneously to all the Stations which are required to attend. The following comparison of calls is interesting:—

In 1895	Fires ...	123
	Ambulance ...	33
	Mortuary	36
	Total	192
In 1968...	Fires	2,957
	Special & emergency services	786
	Total.	3,743

Unfortunately, statistics prior to 1895 are not available.

Fire Prevention Department

The Fire Prevention Department is a comparative newcomer with an operative span of some twenty-five years.

Before 1939 Fire Prevention, if it went by that name, was mainly on a goodwill basis, that is, advice given when required on matters specifically dealing with fire fighting.

Fire Prevention legislation as such was administered under the Cinematograph Acts and Local Theatre licensing conditions, which gave specific powers of inspection.

During the war years, it became obvious that there was a need for a special department of the Fire Service to deal with ever growing demand for advice on fire prevention measures against fires in factories, industrial premises, hospitals, schools and homes, and so on, and in consequence the first Fire Prevention Department was introduced. The first real major step forward was the Fire Services Act, 1947, which required Fire Authorities to make *"Efficient arrangements for the giving, when requested, of advice in respect of buildings and other property in the area of the fire authority as to fire prevention, restricting the spread of fires and means of escape in case of fire"* and gave them powers "to obtain by inspection or otherwise, information with respect to the character of buildings and other property in the area of the fire authority". Whilst giving powers of entry and making the formation of a Fire Prevention Department compulsory, the Act left most of the work carried out to be on a goodwill basis,

Perhaps the first authoritative legislation which applied to the Fire Prevention Department and gave the department powers of prosecution was the Heating Appliances (Fireguards) Act 1952, which laid down certain standards for guards fitted to heating appliances of all types. This Act was later incorporated into the Consumer Protection Act 1961. Fire Prevention continued to grow and courses covering all aspects of the work which had been introduced some time before were held at the Fire Service College. More and more Officers were trained in the dangers and use of new building materials, insulation materials, new and more dangerous chemicals and solvents and so on, but as modern techniques continued to grow an even greater need for officers with specialist knowledge was created.

Following the Bolton Club disaster, the Licensing Act, 1961 was passed and then the Factories Act, 1961, which dealt, amongst other items, with means of escape in case of fire.

1963 saw the introduction of the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act. The purpose of the requirement in the Act is to ensure that reasonable precautions are taken in all premises covered by it, and that in the buildings with greater potential fire hazards, advice of the Brigade on fire prevention and means of escape is automatically made available through the process of certification. The larger shops and offices have to have a certificate from the Brigade that the means of escape at the premises in case of fire are adequate. At the present time, the Brigade has fifteen uniformed members in the Fire Prevention Department assisted by three civilians. It is responsible for the exercise of powers of entry, inspection and certification, where appropriate, under the following Acts:

1. Fire Services Act, 1947
2. Consumer Protection Act, 1961
3. Factories Act, 1961
4. Licensing Act, 1964
5. Public Health Act, 1936
6. Railway Premises Act, 1963
7. Cinematograph Act, 1909
8. Housing Act, 1957
9. Animal Boarding Establishments Act, 1963
10. Riding Establishments Act, 1964
11. Theatres Act, 1968

The Department still, however, continues to perform at least half of its many duties on a goodwill basis, giving advice when required, carrying out special surveys of hospital buildings, school premises, fire investigations, inspections of plans of new buildings; and giving talks and lectures to various groups and organisations.

Fire Stations and Premises

Fire Stations

- No. 1: Division Street, Sheffield S1 3FG (opened 1928)
- No. 2: Darnall Road, Sheffield S9 5AF (opened 1956)
- No. 3: Lowedges Road. Sheffield S8 7JN (opened 1965)
- No. 4: Mansfield Road. Sheffield S12 2AE (opened 1963)
- No. 5: Elm Lane, Sheffield S5 7TU (transferred from National Fire Service 1948—converted war-time building)
- No. 6: Queen Street. Mosborough S19 5BQ (opened 1962—transferred from Derbyshire Fire Service following boundary extensions 1967)
- No. 7: Rivelin Valley Road, Sheffield S6 5FE (opened 1969)

Workshops and Stores Darnall Road, Sheffield S9 5AF (opened 1967)

Dwelling Houses

12: Nos. 2 & 4. Bridle Stile and Nos. 1-21, Bridle Stile Close, Mosborough (built 1962)

Personnel

Uniformed Establishment (authorised)

Chief Fire Officer 1

Assistant Chief Officer 1

Divisional Officers 2

Assistant Divisional Officers 6

Station Officers 19

Sub Officers• 27

Leading Firemen 28

Firemen 173

257

Civilian Staff

Senior Administrative Officer 1

Finance Officer 1

Supply & Transport Officer 1

Storekeeper 1

Clerks 2

Shorthand Typists 4

Tracers 2

12

Civilian Workpeople

Electrical Engineering 1

Mechanics 3

Painters 2

Plumbers 1

Joiner 1

Apprentice Electrician 1

Driver/Handyman 2

Driver/Messenger 1

Cooks and Canteen Staff 8

Cleaners 525

Grand Total 294

Fire Appliances and Vehicles at Present in Service

2	Pump Escapes (each carrying 50 ft. Wheeled Escape)		2	Wireless Cars	
	1950 Dennis	MWE 666		1962 Land Rover	249 WNU
	1950 Dennis	NWE 888		1963 Vauxhall	963 GWA
4	Water Escapes (each carrying 500 gallons of water and 50 ft. Wheeled Escapes)		8	Portable Fire Pumps	
	1966 Merryweather	MWA 615D		6 Hathaway	
	1967 Merryweather	RWB 417E		1 Coventry Climax	
	1967 Merryweather	RWR 418E	14	Lorries, Van and Towing Vehicles	
	1969 Merryweather	AWA 108G		1960 Commer Van	6004 W
9	Water Tenders (each carrying 300 to 500 gallons of water and escape ladders)			1960 Commer Bus	6006 W
	1952 Dennis	RRA 598		1964 Ford Van	BWE 641B
	1953 Dennis	PWE 111		1964 Ford Van	BWE 642B
	1953 Dennis	RWB 999		1964 Ford Van	BWE 643B
	1954 Dennis	SWB 222		1966 Ford Van	LWJ 493D
	1962 Bedford	62 DWE		1966 Ford Van	LWJ 494D
	1963 Dennis	3812 R		1966 Ford Lorry	NWA 364D
	1968 Merryweather	TWB 704F		1967 Land Rover (carrying Hydrant Cleaner)	RWJ 471F
	1968 Merryweather	TWB 705F		1967 Ford Van	RWB 949E
	1969 Merryweather	AWA 109G		1967 Ford Van	RWB 950E
2	Turntable Ladders (100 ft.)			1968 Ford Van	VWB 280F
	1960 Merryweather	9760 WJ		1968 Ford Van	VWB 281F
	1966 Merryweather	LWB 99D		1969 Ford Van	AWB 395G
1.	Simon Snorkel (85 ft. aerial platform)		3	Staff Cars	
	1968 Simon /ERF	WWE 980G		1964 Ford Zephyr	BWE 264 B
2	Emergency Tenders (carrying a comprehensive range of rescue tools and equipment)			1965 Humber Sceptre	GWE 665 C
	1953 Dennis	RWA 444		1968 Ford Zodiac	WWB 515 G
	1969 Land Rover	YWE 496G	47	Total	

A Fireman

The Fire Service is not a career but a profession and a good Fireman makes his work also his hobby. It is surprising how little the community knows about the Fire Brigade and the work of a Fireman. It is not generally understood that the field of knowledge required is far greater than that of almost any other profession and includes mathematics, hydraulics, chemistry, building construction, and so on. No longer can a Fireman go into a building and use water indiscriminately. The modern development of industry has produced many hazardous materials which explode violently on contact with water.

In addition to fire-fighting more and more calls for assistance are being received to deal with accidents on the road, together with rail and aircraft incidents. These are far more difficult often than general fire-fighting, as persons are entangled in a mass of metal often with serious injuries and many times in the centre of flammable vapours from petrol. Special techniques in the use of new equipment are necessary and special training is given to the fireman to help him in dealing with such incidents.

Addendum

The building development that had been carried out in the Stannington and South West Area of the city, and the increasing traffic congestion, made it clear that a new Fire Station would be required and the station in Rivelin was opened during the summer of 1969.



Rivelin Fire Station

Two further stations were completed during the period 1973/74 these were Ringinglow Road and Elm Lane



Ringinglow Fire Station



Elm Lane Fire Station

This was a replacement for a wartime station already on site.

On the 31st March 1974 Chief Fire Officer S. Lambert retired and the City of Sheffield Fire Brigade became part of the South Yorkshire County Fire Service, which became operational from midnight of 31st March 1974.

K.L. Mettam. SDO. Divisional Commander, Sheffield West Division, S.Y.C.F.S.