County Borough of Preston

HISTORY

of

Preston County Borough Fire Brigade

from the

GUILD MERCHANT OF 1702

to the

GUILD MERCHANT OF 1952

By

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and Fireman JOHN MULLANIFF
(Preston County Borough Fire Brigade)

With Foreword by

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Fire Station, Tithebarn Street.

Foreword

At this period in our history when we are struggling against heavy odds to maintain the prestige of the Nation, it is gratifying to think that we may claim with every confidence that the British Fire Service is outstanding in efficiency.

The Personnel of the Service are rightly proud of this fact, and all members of the general public who have come into contact with them share their enthusiasm and pride.

Its efficiency may be traced to two main sources, namely :— ' The Equipment ' and ' Experience of the Personnel.' World War II provided many new situations as regards Fire-Fighting, and gave invaluable experience to the Brigades at that time. It should be emphasised, however, that neither the equipment nor the experience was developed in the comparatively short war-time period, and before a proper understanding of our present organisation can be entirely appreciated, it is necessary to be acquainted with its early history.

Leading Fireman J. Wilkinson and Fireman J. Mullaniff have undertaken, in commemoration of the Preston Guild Merchant of 1952, to write a History of the Preston County Borough Fire Brigade, but in my opinion this may also be taken as a true representation of the Fire Service in general, although the details will, of course, vary in each individual case.

It is significant that this task, which I can personally verify as having taken much time and patience, has been undertaken by two members of the Service, and reflects the interest and pride shown by these men.

In conclusion. I trust that this account will bring home to those who have the privilege of reading it, the achievements of the Preston County Borough Fire Brigade, and I am sure that we may all feel confident that the progress and improvements already shown will continue steadily in the years which lie ahead.

D. KERNOHAN, Grad. I. Fire E.,

Chief Officer.

Preface

On the stone fascia on the front of Preston Fire Station are the words: FIRE ENGINE STATION, BUILT 1852. REBUILT 1900. ENLARGED 1904. Was the year 1852 the beginning of Preston's Fire Brigade? Considering the town's history, this is difficult to believe.

If, however, a Brigade existed before this date, then where was it housed, how was it equipped and how was it manned?

Where to obtain this information was at first a problem. The only knowledge of the subject was from hearsay, for no official information had been published. Any other information must be gleaned from the Town's Archives. Our history, therefore, is a collection of facts which have been taken from the Minute Books of the Corporation, and from the files of local Newspapers, both of which have been stored away for years, yet are still in a good state of preservation.

It is hoped that the reader will forgive any discontinuity of story which may occur. Instances arose where data was very brief, and again considerable lapses of time intervened between one account and the next.

We take this opportunity to express our many thanks to the Town Clerk's Department and the Fire Brigade Administrative Staff for their co-operation and help.

J. WILKINSON. Grad. I. Fire E.

J. MULLANIFF.

FIRE BRIGADE HISTORY

CHAPTER I.

The First Fire Engine and Water Supply.

The Brigade Established.

BEFORE describing the history of Preston's Fire Brigade it will be helpful to consider early methods of fire extinction in this country. From the time of the Romans until the Great Fire of London in 1666, the chief fire fighting weapon employed was the " squirt " which was similar to that used during the Roman occupation. In the early 17th century, fire prevention generally was governed by regulations which required that :—

> " A barrel full of water for quenching fires should be left before the door of a building " and that " the bellmen ring their bells at night " and call out " Take care of your fire and candle, be charitable to the poor, and pray for the dead."

The Great Fire caused the citizens of London to turn their attention to the problem of fire risk, and as a result of their schemes, to cover themselves against loss, Fire Insurance Companies came into being in 1684 and greatly increased in numbers during the following years.

To indicate the buildings which they were protecting, the Insurance Companies produced " Fire Marks," which were metal emblems with the company crest and a number. The Companies had their own fire brigades, and whilst there is no direct evidence on this point, it is not unreasonable to assume that a fire brigade called out and finding a rival's fire mark on the building involved, immediately lost interest in fighting the flames and let them blaze away.

In 1948 during the demolition of old property in Craggs Row and Harrisons Hill, Moor Lane, Preston, an old 'Sun' fire-mark, was discovered, attached to part of an old windmill. Research by the Sun Insurance, London office showed that this fire-mark, No. 636503 related to an insurance policy taken out on January 13th, 1795 by John Singleton and Thomas Buxton, described as " Of Preston in the City of Lancaster, Corn Dealers."

In the Orders of the 1702 Preston Guild Merchant is to be found

> " an order against smoking or taking tobacco in the streets, back wiends, and lanes " which was enacted in consequence of " much damage having been done and many houses and barns having been unhappily set on fire."

It was further ordered that any one smoking in any place where there was any hay, straw, turf, wood, chips, shavings, flax, tow, hemp, or other combustible matter, or on any house he was repairing, or on any cart laden with corn or hay, he should be liable to a penalty of Five Shillings.

Before the 1722 Guild Merchant great concern was expressed concerning the danger of fire, and to eliminate this risk, the Hon. Daniel Poulteney, M.P., for Preston, presented to the town

> " an engine for the extinguishing of fire, of late invention and which had been tried with success."

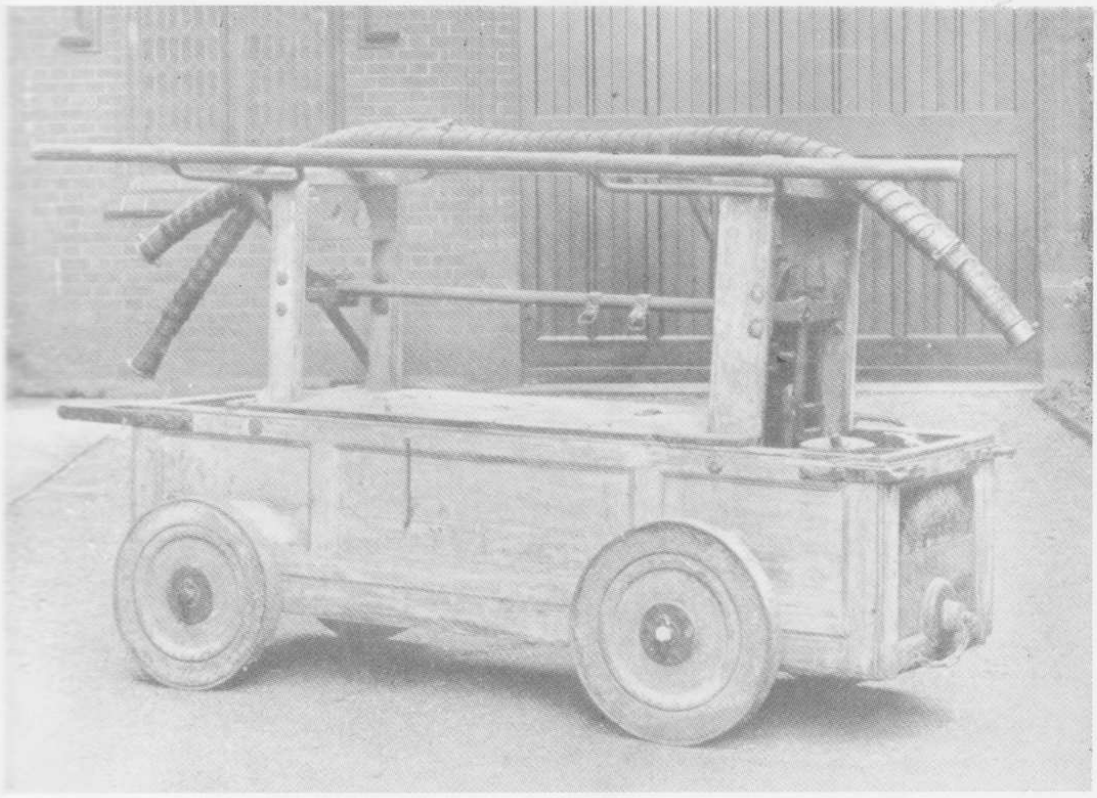
The Borough Council decided to purchase a second engine of the same type, and having granted £20 from the Corporation funds directed the Mayor

> " to appoint some proper person to go about in order to get contributions to defray the remainder of the cost."

In 1729 Robert Abbatt, a chapman, and Thomas Kellett, a joiner, entered into an agreement with the Corporation to supply the inhabitants of the Borough with water. For this purpose two closes of land near to Avenham Garden were leased to them by the Corporation at an annual rent of £4. The water was collected from Syke Hill and the waste ground about the town, and deposited in a cistern situated in the North West corner of the old gas works in Glovers Street. From here it was then conveyed through the town in bored trees which supplied a cistern conduit in the market place. Taps were fixed at intervals from which the water was sold. One of the conditions of the agreement was that in addition to these taps there should be five water cocks or plugs at such places as the Mayor should direct, for the extinguishment of fires.

A fund " Subscriptions for Fire Engines " was opened in 1803, to which the citizens of the town subscribed very generously and from this fund four engines were purchased. Research by the Sun Insurance Office brought to light the following information:—

> " Two entries appear in our minute books, dated the 13th September, 1804, and the 10th March, 1825, which voted £21 and £20 respectively, to Preston towards an engine."



Early 18th Century Fire Engine

Information from the " Sun " also established the fact

> " That in London a permanent staff of firemen was employed by the Office, and it was the custom throughout the country to grant small monetary payments to members of the public who helped to extinguish fires in property insured by the ' Sun '."

The ' engines ' at this time were manned by any convenient volunteers, but the fire fighting operations were directed by police officers. It may be of interest at this point to describe briefly the type of appliance then known as a Fire Engine. This comprised two force pumps, placed vertically side by side, and connected at their deliveries by a horizontal tube and rose vertically to terminate in a long movable nozzle. The rods attached to the pistons of the pumps were connected to a lever which pivoted between the centre of the piston rods. When the lever was operated so the piston rods rose and fell, and water was forced through to the nozzle.

The pump was housed in one end of a wooden trough. Arranged over the pump was a wooden cabinet, the likely purpose of which was to cover the pump and give suitable fastening to the rocking lever which worked the piston rods. The top of this cabinet was big enough for a man to stand on, so that he was able to direct the water stream on to the fire. The delivery passed up through this cabinet and out at the top, terminating in the long nozzle already mentioned. The whole of this assembly was carried on four wheels.

The rocking lever was duplicated at the opposite end, the levers being connected by a central rod which also acted as a pivot on which the levers worked. A wooden pole also connected the levers at their ends and this provided leverage for quite a number of operators.

To operate the engine, volunteers manned the levers while as many others as possible brought water in buckets and emptied them into the trough. When sufficient water had been brought, pumping was begun by working the levers up and down, at the same time the nozzle would be handled by a competent person. As an added leverage, foot treadles were provided on some machines to give extra effort in the working of the pump. It is highly probable that the engines used by Preston at this period were made by Richard Newsham, of London.

By Private Act of Parliament in 1815, certain powers were vested in a Body of Improvement Commissioners, the members of which were not elected, but qualified by virtue of being property or landowners. Thus a person whose land was worth £100 per annum or whose property was worth £50 per annum was eligible. The commissioners were given power to pave the streets, public and private ; to light streets ; to purchase Fire Engines and procure Firemen. They were also the

licensing authority for all vehicles. For the purpose of the Act they were allowed to purchase land not exceeding half an acre, and to borrow up to £10,000, and also empowered to levy watching, paving, lighting, and to appoint a Treasurer, Clerk, Assessor, and Surveyor.

In accordance with the legislation for the organisation of fire brigades, the Commissioners made the first appointments. On the 2nd February, 1818, Mr. W. Elsworth was appointed Captain General, Mr. F. Kitchen was appointed Captain in charge of No. 1 engine, and Mr. J. Parish, Captain in charge of No. 2 engine. Sixteen firemen were appointed (eight per engine) and it was resolved that engines were to be cleaned once a month and that the firemen should be furnished with "fire hats." It was also decided to give rewards for attendance at fires according to the following scale :—

"To the Captain and firemen of the first engine to arrive at the scene of the fire £2 2s. 0d."

"for the second engine to arrive £1 1s. 0d."

At this time Horrockses Cotton Mill maintained an engine with Captain and crew who were therefore included in the abovementioned rewards.

On the 14th February, 1818, a fire occurred at a Mr. Howarth's Size-house, Friargate. Horrocks' engine was the first on the scene, and was followed by Mr. Kitchen and the crew of No. 1 engine. As a result of this, Mr. Horrocks' captain and firemen qualified for the first reward to be paid.

On the 3rd January, 1825, a new committee was formed to obtain information as to a fire engine on the best principles, and to confer with the agents of the various Fire Insurance Offices as to their subscribing to a new engine for this Borough, the present fire engines being in a very poor state and incapable of improvement.

New engines were delivered on October 17th, 1827, and arrangements were made to establish them in a more suitable building. Accordingly, land and buildings were purchased in Woodcock's Court at a cost of £1,300. In 1831 more convenient premises were established in Avenham Street, and a fire bell was installed.

With the growth of the cotton industry in Preston came the need for a more powerful fire engine and the committee decided to purchase a machine "powerful enough to throw water on to the topmost portion of the highest building in Preston." This was subsequently supplied by J. Hollins of Manchester on the 15th September, 1837, at a cost of £145 and was later known as "VICTORIA."

Newsham's engines formed the basis of further improvements in fire engine design. These consisted of metal valves for those of leather, the disuse of treadles and fittings, and the increase in the length

of lever handles beyond the length of the carriage. Later, the height of the engine was increased and the fore-carriage made of iron, with the transome so arranged that the engine could turn round in its own length. The alterations in design also provided for the use of horses in drawing the engines. It is doubtful whether the " VICTORIA " was horsedrawn or not, but it certainly performed well.

On Saturday, November 14th, 1837, a fire occurred in North Road in premises belonging to a Mr. Dandy. The buildings comprised three floors and a cellar. The cellar was used for storing cotton waste, and the first floor stored meal and flour, the remaining floors were occupied by a cabinet maker.

The fire started just after midnight and the following report is taken from the " Preston Pilot " :—

> " It is painful to report that its speedy extinguishment was prevented solely by the delay and mismanagement in applying the proper means. The fire engines were not quickly on the spot and two of them were not in the efficient state of working that the town has a right to expect. Again, there was great bungling and loss of time in getting the proper supply of water."
>
> " Now these are defects in the fire police that should not exist. A more frequent and careful inspection of the engines should be made, and the method of opening the public water plugs should not be a mystery except to two or three individuals ; every police officer should be instructed in this matter."
>
> " The whole town seems to be ringing with complaint at the confusion and want of method that prevailed. It is only justice to say that the newly procured " VICTORIA " engine was in the most excellent order."

After this unfortunate incident the Commissioners held a special meeting and came to the conclusion that a Superintendent of Fire Brigade was needed. Consequently, on the 6th December, 1837, Mr. Samuel Bradley was appointed Superintendent at a salary of £25 per annum. The committee also agreed on the following points :—

To persons calling the Superintendent in case of fire, 1/- would be paid.

Engines were to be tested once a month instead of quarterly, and firemen should be paid 1/- per hour for carrying out these duties.

Branchmen were to receive 6d. an hour extra at all fires, and 6d. an hour was granted for all unofficial assistants at fires.

The Committee also ordered that the Superintendent and at least half of the force must reside close by the engine house.

Mr. Bradley chose 17 new men, and quickly organised his brigade. The position of hydrants was made known to his men, and he obtained through the committee the following small gear :—

> 2 small suction tubs for small engines, 1 saw, 1 hatchet, 1 pick-axe, 2 tomahawks, 1 crowbar, 1 folding ladder (16 ft.), 1 dozen torches, 100 tin tickets, and 2 keys for water plugs.

Mr. Bradley also worked out a duty rotation sheet, and had 24 keys made for the engine house.

In Mr. Bradley's time it was difficult during a fire to recognise the firemen, as the people ' assisting ' at fires often got in the way or did the wrong thing, and the superintendent was unable to recognise his own men at a glance. As a result of this difficulty, suitable clothes were provided for the firemen, and all assistent firemen were provided with arm badges. That problems still arose is borne out by the following extracts from Mr. Bradley's reports to the Council. One dated February 14th, 1842, states that :—

> " Mr. Bradley was five men short due to the clothes not fitting the men that offered themselves."

The other dated June 20th, 1842, says :—

> " Mr. Bradley reported that he had dismissed one man for misconduct, but the man refused to give up his clothes."

In 1843 a hose reel and carriage was purchased at a cost of £30 for conveying hose speedily to a fire. The hose, Vaucher's patent woven type, was 60 yards in length, and had been tried in Manchester and other large Brigades. It was found to answer admirably, and was much cheaper than the riveted type.

The Superintendent was ordered to inspect fire plugs four times a year. A resolution was also passed concerning payment for attendance at fires, and reads as follows :—

> " That in cases where premises are insured, the insurance offices be charged with all expenses, and that the use of the engines be charged in addition ; when such offices have not contributed towards the purchase of the engines, and when the premises are not insured, the owner will only be charged for the cost of the assistant firemen."

Horse-Drawn Manual Fire Engine
Period About 1840

CHAPTER II.

Drills Introduced and Further Developments.

IT was apparent that 'practice' or 'drill' as it is known, would improve the efficiency of the firemen, and so 'practices' were introduced. The following is a report of one such occasion which took place on Thursday, 25th January, 1845:—

"The Borough Fire Brigade Force had a practice day on Thursday last. The scene of their operations was the vacant plot of ground at the top of Oxford Street, and we have much pleasure in saying that the regular systematic dispatch with which the practice was gone through afforded a very favourable testimony of their efficiency, and consequently was highly creditable to the skill and attention of Superintendent Bradley.

We will particularise one of the performances, and having done so, we shall have no fear of its being deserved worthy of great commendation.

An engine was placed at about 30 yards from a building in which it is to be supposed that a fire was raging, and that it was indispensable that a ladder should be raised against it in order to allow a fireman to direct the discharge of water to subdue or extinguish the fire.

On the engine were placed the hose reel, three lengths of leather hose, the pipe, and sucking pipe. A tub to hold the water conveyed by another pipe from the main plug in the street, and two lengths of ladder which are prepared for uniting if required.

Now the combined operations included the opening of the grate which covers the main plug in the street, and attaching the hose to convey a supply of water to the tub; the sucker had to be secured to its proper place on the engine, and the other end placed in the tub. The ladders were carried away and the two portions united to make one of sufficient length to reach the roof; the ladders were raised, the three lengths of hose run off the reel and a fireman carrying with him the pipe, mounted the ladder and placed himself in readiness to pour water into or upon such parts of the building as might be desired for the extinction of the fire.

All these varying operations were performed by seven men, but now comes the crowning fact. The length of time occupied in their performance on one occasion was only 45 seconds, and on the next

occasion a more incredibly brief period of 40 seconds. A fact like this, evinces, we think, a high degree of efficiency in the force, and gives encouragement to a feeling of confidence that when their services are required they will be found in the best state of preparation for proving effectual."

In the year 1846 the firemen asked Mr. Bradley to put forward a request for the payment of an additional allowance as their pay did not equal that of the Blackburn firemen or of Firemen in other towns. This request was not granted, but about this time "Slates" were fixed outside the doors of Firemen's houses with the word 'Fireman' painted on them.

The first promotion recorded occurs on the 19th January, 1846, when D. Graham was appointed to the rank of Sergeant "at a salary of £5 per annum plus allowances, and that his dress should bear some mark of distinction." This promotion was no doubt made because the failing health of Superintendent Bradley made it essential that someone should be responsible in the absence of the Superintendent.

It is obvious from the records that Mr. Bradley had not enjoyed the best of health in these later years, and it is not surprising to read that on October 15th, 1846, he resigned owing to ill health, and as a result Mr. Graham was made temporary Superintendent.

The Commissioners had advertised the vacant post, and received replies from D. Bibby of Liverpool, and D. Graham of Preston Brigade, who was supported by a letter from eleven of the firemen recommending him for the post of Superintendent. Mr. Graham was accepted as Superintendent on February 1st, 1847, and in addition to his Fire Brigade duties was made Inspector of Nuisances. This post, however, did not carry any extra salary.

The duties of an Inspector of Nuisances included the inspection of the streets and courts to see that these were kept reasonably clean. It appears that dirt and filth accumulated, and if it was not cleared away soon became offensive.

It is on record that in December, 1849, there was an infection of Cholera, and firemen swilled the streets in certain parts of the town. As there was no proper sanitation or waste disposal there is little wonder that infection was rife.

In May, 1847, Superintendent Graham was instructed by the Committee to report at the first meeting after a fire had occurred concerning the conduct of his men, and the time taken in arriving at the premises on fire. In the same month it was resolved that the Engine House be lighted with gas under the best principles.

Payment for the use of the Fire Engines and Firemen still proved difficult to obtain. To overcome this difficulty a paper was drawn up

and presented for signature to the various Mill Owners within ten miles of the boundary of Preston. The paper was in the form of an undertaking that they (the Mill Owners) would refund the expenses resulting from the conveying to, and working of the Fire Engines at their premises should the Engines be required at any time by them. This procedure put things on a more businesslike basis.

About this time efforts were made to purchase a new machine " at not more than £140." At the same time the offer of Mr. Arkwright for the purchase of the No. 2 Engine for £35 was accepted.

The Clerk was instructed to write to Captain Willis, Chief of Manchester Fire Brigade, and to the Superintendent of the Glasgow Fire Department, to enquire as to the power, effect and cost of J. White, Esquire's Engine. The replies cannot have been satisfactory, for the Clerk at a later date went to Manchester to " order an efficient Fire Engine from a Mr. Rose, with whatever necessary appendages he may think justified, and contract for the same."

A new Engine was subsequently acquired, and fitted with the necessary attachments to enable the Appliance to be horse-drawn.

Towards the end of 1848 a fire occurred at Longridge, and afterwards a dispute arose concerning payments. It is assumed that information reached Preston by messenger that the services of the Fire Brigade were required at one Mr. Whittle's in Longridge, and accordingly the Brigade turned out a Fire Engine in charge of Superintendent Graham. By the time the machine had reached Ribbleton Moor opposite Mr. Croft's house, a messenger on horseback was encountered, who told Mr. Graham that the fire was out. Mr. Graham, however, decided to continue, and this decision gave rise to the dispute. The building at Longridge was insured by the ' Sun ', and when the account was presented for the use of Engine and Firemen (£5 for use of Engine, and 4s. 6d. for each Fireman), Mr. Hey's of the Sun Fire Office, objected to paying this amount. He pointed out that as the Fire Brigade were not required, and as they had been so informed by messenger at Ribbleton Moor, he saw no reason why his office should pay the account.At a meeting of the Commissioners, Mr. Graham stated that had they turned back, the charge for Firemen would have been 2s. 6d. instead of 4s. 6d. and so the Commissioners resolved that the firemen be allowed only 2s. 6d. but that the amount with respect to the horses and engine, i.e., £5, remain. The Firemen, however, did not agree to losing 2s. 0d. each, and the Superintendent had to pay the Firemen out of his own pocket.

In 1849 a fire occurred at Lancaster, which caused more trouble over payment. The following is an extract from a letter which was sent to the Insurance Company :—

" We would like to point out that the Fire Establishment in Preston is not supported by Insurance

> Companies as in many other Towns, but out of the Police Rates. Therefore, the amount charged ought to be paid by the Fire Insurance Office premises, particularly in view of the fact that the upkeep of the Brigade is out of the rates, and costs above £300 per annum."

This case resulted in legal proceedings against the owners of the premises.

It is obvious from the accounts of the last two fires that horses were used for drawing the engines. The horses were obtained from the hostler at the Bull Hotel. Arrangements were in hand whereby horses would be available for drawing the engines as soon as the fire bell was rung. The charge made for the hire of horses was 5s. 0d. for the first Engine, and 2s. 6d. for the second.

CHAPTER III.

Theory and Practice.
More Drill and Firefighting.

IT is interesting to note that even in these early days of fire engines and their attachments, much interest was displayed regarding the merits or demerits of one engine as compared with another. A report from the Preston Pilot of February, 1849, regarding the new fire engine says :—

> " Some dispute having arisen as to the powers of the new fire engine which has been purchased for the town, it having been stated that the one belonging to Messrs. Horrockses, Miller & Co., which was built in 1804, would throw water higher than the new one, with all the recent improvements, a second trial was made on Wednesday afternoon at the factory of Mr. Postlethwaite in Grimshaw Street, which is 89 ft. high, and water was propelled 20 ft. higher than the top of the building. The engine belonging to Messrs. Horrockses, Miller & Co., will not, we believe, throw water much higher than 80 ft."

It should not be imagined that the firemen of this period were inferior to the firemen of today. On the contrary, they were just as interested in understanding their work and improving their appliances. The Preston Pilot for March 4th, 1849, contains a description of one of their exercises :—

> " The monthly practice of the Fire Brigade took place during the week. The new and powerful engine, the ' Prince of Wales ' was taken to Pitt Street, and Mr. Graham, Superintendent of the Force, made several experiments in the working of it. The suction pipe was attached to one of the fire plugs, and the great force with which the water rushes from the plug, materially assisted in the efficient working of the engine. By this means water was thrown to the top of the chimney of Mr. Clayton's Mill, a height of 105 ft. and an elevation of 20 ft. or more than it could be thrown by the engine alone, unassisted by the fire plug and worked in the ordinary way.
>
> The Engine was then taken to the bridge over the canal in Marsh Lane, and an attempt was made to work the engine from the canal, the surface of which is much lower than the

level of the street, but this could not be accomplished. Mr. Graham then attached to the engine an appendage which had been made under his direction, the water was immediately raised from the canal with facility, and the engine was worked being supplied from this source. Several other experiments were tried and succeeded admirably. Mr. J. J. Myers, Mr. Benson, Mr. Manchester, and other Police Commissioners were present at the practice."

The introduction of fire extinguishers is recorded in the Preston Pilot for 1852 :—

"We understand that on Monday last, February 9th, Mr. Graham received instructions from the Fire and Lighting Committee to purchase two of Phillips Fire Annihilators* No. 5, and 20 Charges, for use of the Fire Brigade in case of fire. The Committee being satisfied they will be a good auxiliary to the brigade but they consider that they will not supersede the fire engines."

In 1845 the Police Commissioners had reserved a plot of land in Tithebarn Street, for the erection of Public Buildings, and in January, 1852, plans were made for a new Fire Station on this site. The Fire Brigade Committee received tenders for the erection of the building which included a Superintendent's House. Eight tenders were received and that of Mr. Thompson of Cannon Street was accepted. £570 was apportioned from the following year's rates to cover the cost of the building. It should be stated that in September, 1851, the Fire and Lighting Committee had in mind a site in Saul Street for the erection of the new Station. In October of the same year, at a joint meeting of the Fire and Lighting and General Purposes Committees, it was decided not to occupy so large a portion of the yard in Saul Street. Instead the portion of land in Tithebarn Street, South of the 'Lady of the Lake,' was recommended for the site, and it is on this site that the present Fire Station stands.

On the 24th May, 1852, the foundation stone was laid for the new premises, and the following is an account of the ceremony which was printed in the local press on May 29th :—

"On Monday last, the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of a range of buildings in Tithebarn Street for the reception of the

* This was an early type of hand extinguisher, working on the principle of gas and vapour expulsion resulting from combustion due to the action of Sulphuric Acid on a mixture of Chlorate and Sugar. The hot gases escaped from the discharge tube in a "dense, expansive cloud," and the annihilator was suitable for use in dwelling houses and other buildings, and was later supplied for use mounted on a carriage.

Extract from "1851-1951 The Great Exhibition. Fire Appliances a Century Ago."—Fire Protection and Accident Prevention Review, May, 1951.

Fire Brigade, and the accommodation of the Fire Brigade in general, was performed by Mr. T. Monk, Mayor.

Mr. Rampling is the Architect and Mr. G. Thompson the Contractor for the erection.

The building will comprise an Engine Shed and Stable, a House for the Superintendent, and will be surmounted by a Tower.

At noon, the Mayor and Members of the Corporation, preceded by a band of music, with all the corporate paraphernalia, and followed by a large number of friends, started from the Town Hall door—a procession very imposing in its aspect being thus formed—and walked to the spot.

Having arrived at the spot, the party ranged themselves round the stone, the principal members of the Town Council being in the inner circle, and a large concourse of spectators at the outside. An oblong box containing the current coins of the realm in the present reign, a parchment relative to the event and copies of the 'Chronicle,' 'Pilot' and 'Guardian,' were placed in the cavity of the stone.

Mr. Thompson then said, "Mr. Mayor, as the Contractor for the erection of this Fire-Police Station, I have very great pleasure in handing you this trowel." The trowel, which was thus presented to His Worship was of most chaste workmanship the blade was of silver, the handle being composed of highly polished ivory; the article was worthy of the auspicious occasion for which it was used, and very creditable to the skill of Mr. Lowe—the maker of it.

It bore the following inscription:—

> "Presented to Thos. Monk, Esq., Mayor of Preston and one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the County of Lancaster; by the contractor for the erection of the Fire-Police Station, on the occasion of his laying of the foundation stone on May 24th, 1852."

By October 2nd, 1852, the top stone of the tower was elevated into position, "in the presence of the Mayor, to whose liberality the workmen can bear cheerful testimony."

The last time the Brigade turned out from the Old Avenham Street 'Lock-up' to a fire of note was on Sunday, January 17th, 1852, at 9-15 p.m. when information was brought that a fire had broken out at Longridge Railway Station, in Ribbleton Lane. The 'Prince of

Wales ' and ' Victoria ' Engines with the hose reel, were speedily equipped and proceeded with the Fire Brigade under the direction of Superintendent Graham, to the scene of the conflagration.

On reaching the spot, the flames presented a most alarming appearance, but it was found that the fire was confined to a shed which contained two locomotives.

The fire plug at Barton Terrace was set to work, and the flames were soon under control. Damage to one of the engines amounted to about £20 whilst the total damage was estimated at about £40.

As a result of a slight misdemeanour Superintendent Graham and the Fire Brigade were placed under the direction of the Surveyor, Mr. Wrigg. The Superintendent was at the disposal of the Surveyor for other duties, and whatever work this involved, his salary was £1 0s. 0d. per week with house, fire, gas and clothing. Despite the new set up, the Brigade continued to show more efficiency as a report on the monthly practice of September 11th, 1852, will show :—

" The monthly practice of this active body of men took place on Thursday afternoon last. Under the direction of Superintendent Graham, an old engine, which had nearly fallen into disuse was brought out at 20 minutes past four. The scaling ladders were speedily connected to the top of the Police Office, and three men ascended. Three lengths of hose were then connected to the engine, and a volume of water was ejected higher than the Mill of Messrs. Horrockses and Jacksons, the engine was found to be in first rate working condition.

The ' Victory,' another engine, was next tried. The firemen by means of the joint ladders mounted the brew house of the ' Garth's Arms,' from whence they ascended another house until ultimately they attained the giddy height of a six storey warehouse. Six lengths of hose were put into requisition, and water was discharged 15 yards higher than the building.

The men then brought out the ' Prince of Wales ' engine, and started with it at ten minutes to five for the big factory in Fishwick, a distance of one mile. They set off at a rattling speed ; threw water thirteen times by two lengths of hose each time, which of course required packing and unpacking after each occasion, playing once from the big factory lodge, and found themselves ensconced in the Station, Avenham Street, at a quarter past five, thus accomplishing the feat in twenty-five minutes.

The Brigade we believe was never in so efficient a condition as at the present time."

When it is remembered that this happened one hundred years ago, it must be acknowledged that the efficiency of the Brigade was improving rapidly.

In May, 1854, Superintendent Graham retired, and in June of the same year, a Mr. Henry Marriott was appointed his successor. Mr. Marriott first came to Preston in 1842 as a Private in the 6th Regiment of Foot (Warwick), and was stationed in the Barracks in Water Street. Not long after his arrival, however, he was purchased out of the Army, and entered the employment of a Mr. Gillett, Stoneygate, as a book-keeper. At a later date he joined the Police Force, and when a vacancy arose for the position of Sanitary Inspector, he was the successful applicant and began his duties in 1851.

Two years after Mr. Marriott's appointment to the Fire Brigade a serious fire occurred at Samlesbury, and the 'Preston Pilot' of February 2nd, 1856, gave this report.

> " Between 12 and 1 o'clock on Tuesday morning, a fire broke out in Roach Mill, Samlesbury, of Messrs. J. W. Dall & Sons, which resulted in the entire destruction of the building. The Mill is situate on the banks of the River Darwen, and is distant from Preston about 3 miles. The building which was erected in 1802 was composed of stone, seven storeys in height, and had several outbuildings attached.
>
> The fire was discovered by a woman named Mary Abbott who resided in the cottage next to the mill, and who about 12 o'clock detected the smell of burning cotton in the mill. Shortly afterwards she went out to look at the mill and she perceived flames issuing from the Carding Room windows. Having raised the alarm the workpeople in the cottages hastened to the spot, but there being no fire engines nearer to the place than Preston, a mounted messenger was instantly despatched to the fire brigade station in this town.
>
> The messenger arrived soon after 1 o'clock, but owing to the slippery state of the roads due to frost, a considerable delay took place before horses could be obtained for the engines. It was about half past two when Mr. Marriott, Superintendent of the fire brigade accompanied by twelve firemen arrived at the scene of the conflagration. The flames in the meantime had made such rapid progress that the firemen saw that all attempts to save the mill would be futile, and they therefore directed their exertions to the preservation of the adjoining property.
>
> The river provided an easy and copious supply of water, and large numbers of people being congregated round the building,

the engines were speedily got into working order. Almost immediately after the arrival of the fire brigade the main building fell in with a tremendous crash, fortunately injuring no person in its fall. The heat is described as being intense, so much so as almost to prevent the firemen approaching the building near enough to throw water on it.

The firemen succeeded in saving the west wing of the mill together with the outer offices, but the only portions of the main building remaining intact were the gable ends, one of these the S.W. one, fell in the course of Tuesday.

The firemen, ably directed by Mr. Marriott, exerted themselves in a most energetic manner, and great praise is due to them for their active and unwearied exertions on the occasion.

The men continued at the scene of the fire during the whole of Tuesday, occasionally playing water on the smouldering ruins. The loss is computed to amount to nearly £14,000 and the disaster has thrown out of work 160 hands."

Reports of this nature give a good idea of the conditions and circumstances which prevailed in those far off days when fire engines were manually operated and horse drawn. Firemen today with their modern appliances and equipment would find it no easy task to quell an outbreak of fire similar to the one just described.

Another report on the 30th December, 1856, shows that a fire occurred at Messrs. Bashall and Boardman's Mill, Farington. A railway engine was in the yard (branch line) and this was despatched to Preston for a Fire Engine. On the directions of the messenger a truck was prepared at the Station for the despatch of ' Victoria,' with Mr. Marriott and a body of men to Farington. They were transported by special train, arriving at 11 o'clock (a.m.), but were not needed for active work.

CHAPTER IV.

Coming of the "Steamers" and Alonzo Savage.

LITTLE has been mentioned since the period of 1837 about the water supplies for fire fighting. In the middle of the 19th century the same type of fire plug was in use, but whether the water mains were still the bored trees used in 1729, is not quite clear. In 1832, a Share-holding body known as The Preston Waterworks Company was formed by Act of Parliament. Capital consisted of £15,000 and 300 shares of £50. Power was obtained to borrow a further £10,000. The Company made a reservoir at Grimsargh, and their operations drove the 'Folly' and other water supplying schemes out of existence.

In 1857 a Committee was formed to inspect fire plugs. A new type had been developed by Messrs. Bateman & Moore, and was known as a 'Ball hydrant.' This type was a big improvement on the existing fire plug, so the Committee resolved that the "patent ball fire plug be approved." Prices were :– 2½" 20/- and 3" 30/- nett, and at a meeting on 16th October, 1857, the Committee resolved that Bateman & Moore's patent ball hydrants should be immediately adopted, and that the Surveyor should obtain the highest price for the old ones.

It is interesting to note that at this period the strength of the Fire Brigade was 30 men, including the Superintendent, Mr. Marriott. This total remained more or less the same up to the time of the Second World War.

On the 7th February, 1861, another serious fire broke out in Preston, and the Press of the time said that :—

> "One of the most disastrous conflagrations that have taken place in Preston for many years occurred on Thursday evening, namely the total destruction of one of the Mills belonging to Messrs. J. Horrocks & Sons, Cotton Spinners etc., Adelphi Street. The firm have three Mills all situated within a few yards of one another, and the building destroyed was known as "The Old Mill," it was a brick erection, six storeys high and contained above 30,000 spindles.
>
> Information was received at the Fire Station, Tithebarn Street, a few minutes before 9 o'clock in the evening. The hose reel was immediately despatched to the scene of the fire, and Mr. Marriott and the Brigade quickly followed with the 'Prince of Wales' and 'Victoria' Engines. On their arrival

they found the fire raging in the third storey portion of the Mill and a few minutes later the floor of that storey fell with a loud crash into the second storey.

Mr. Marriott directed a branch to be taken to the South Side, the hose being fed with a plug opposite the Mill gates. Finding however that he had not sufficient pressure from the plug in question he had a hose connected to the ' Prince of Wales ' Engine and taken into the third storey, that Engine and the ' Victoria ' being fed from the Lodge adjoining the Mill. The Brigade were thus able to pour copious streams of water into the room, but all their efforts to quench the flames were unavailing, and the heat became so intense on the staircase that the men were compelled to desist from their efforts in that quarter. The Brigade proceeded to the fourth storey, where they played some time on the flames below, the fire by this time had spread to the whole of the storeys of the Mill, but the firemen were baffled in their attempts to reach the top storey on account of the large amount of burning materials constantly falling from the storey above. The fire spread with amazing rapidity, and all the efforts of the firemen to conquer the fiery elements were completely powerless, the heat as well as dense volumes of smoke that rolled down the staircase compelled the men to quit the positions they had taken up, and their efforts were then directed to the preservation of the adjoining buildings. These included the shed, scutching room and mixing room, situated on the east side of the Mill.

These buildings were connected with the old Mill by a passage or gallery, and required the unwearied attention of the Brigade to prevent flames extending from the Mill to the buildings in question, as it was, the roof of the passage repeatedly caught fire. A branch was directed against the rear of the Mill and two other branches were brought to bear on the south side of the shed. Fortunately the efforts of Mr. Marriott and the Brigade to prevent the flames from communicating in this direction were successful. The appearance of the fire when raging throughout the entire building was grand in the extreme, from every window columns of flames poured forth and ultimately the roof fell in with a tremendous crash, the fire then shot up to a great height, casting a terrific light for miles on every side.

Thousands of people had by this time assembled, and the reflection of the fire on their upturned faces had a remarkable effect. Even from the vicinity of the Mill all the houses on Moor Park could be distinctly seen by the intense light, and

every available spot from which a view of the Mill could be obtained was seen to be crowded with people. At least 15,000 to 20,000 people must have been watching this terrific fire.

At 10 o'clock a small portion of the North Wall fell outwards on to an adjoining weaving shed ; this was soon followed by a larger mass, then the East gable came down with a tremendous crash, shaking the ground like a miniature earthquake to a great distance. A little later the greater portion of the south wall fell on to a shed adjoining that side, and the mill was a complete wreck, the west wall and the two corners of the east wall alone being left standing.

The night was very calm, and the smoke and flames ascended almost perpendicularly accompanied by immense clouds of burning pieces of timber which fell in showers to a great distance. Three of the Brigade had a very narrow escape with their lives. They were standing on a ladder which they had raised against the South East end of the Mill and whilst endeavouring to prevent the flames reaching the scutching and mixing rooms, a portion of the wall extending from the top of the basement fell without any previous warning, the ladder was thrown down, and the men fell from opposite the third storey. Providentially they were not seriously injured although at first it was feared that one of them was killed.

Messrs. Horrockses & Son are insured for £27,000 with six insurance companies, having a double insurance with one of the offices."

Later experiences of the Brigade underlined the need for better and more powerful engines. About this time steam fire engines were being developed. The two British firms who had entered this particular field of Fire Engineering were ' Merryweather ' and Shand Mason & Co., but it was not until 1871 that Preston changed to the ' steamer.'

It was on January 25th, 1871, that the Preston Water Committee agreed to recommend to the Town Council that an allowance of £10 each be made to Messrs. Shand Mason & Co., and Messrs. Merryweather & Son, towards the cost of a competitive trial of their respective fire engines, in view of the possibility of one of them being ordered for the Borough.

The trial was arranged and took place on 6th April at the premises of Mr. McGuffog of Greenbank before a great number of spectators. Both machines had many admirers and the final choice rested upon a jury of six persons who had been previously chosen. So close was the trial that when the jurors gave their verdict it was found that three voted for the Merryweather and three for the Shand Mason. In consequence of this evenly balanced opinion it was decided to stage another

and still more severe test the following day in the vicinity of Fylde Road Bridge. This second trial decided that Shand Mason's engine should be purchased at a cost of £600 and " that Messrs. Shand Mason & Co., be required to guarantee the engine and boiler for the term of five years, from any defect arising from imperfect materials or workmanship."

Three days later this same engine was used at a fire in Strand Road, pumping water from the River.

The advent of the telephone as a means of communication is reflected in a letter dated 4th April, 1881, to the Clerk, from Mr. McIver, Secretary of the Lancashire Telephone Exchange Company Ltd., Manchester. This letter requested permission to cross streets with wire and place poles, and offered to furnish a wire from the Company Office in Lancaster Road to the Fire Station free of charge.

Permission was granted but the Company were to pay 1/- per annum in acknowledgement of the privilege. The offer was declined. Later in the same year permission was again sought to connect the Fire Station with the Exchange. The cost was to be borne by the Telephone Company. The offer was again declined.

Permission was granted on 21st December, 1881, the Company to pay the cost of everything plus 1/- per annum for the privilege. This to be in perpetuity. Such an undertaking was too much for the Company, and on 14th February, 1882, the Corporation received a letter stating that they, the Company, could not undertake the free service for a longer period than three years. The Corporation insisted on perpetuity, but by 18th March, the telephone was installed subject to three months notice by either party.

On the 24th January, 1883, the death of Superintendent Marriott is recorded. The ' Preston Guardian ' gave this report :—

> " Our readers will regret to hear of the death of Mr. H. Marriott, Superintendent of the local Fire Brigade, which took place at his residence shortly after 8 a.m. on Saturday. Mr. Marriott's career has been of a somewhat interesting character. During his 30 years as a Corporation servant he fulfilled his duties very satisfactorily. He was the patentee of a Fire Escape which is now in use in most large towns in the country. During his time he excelled at cricket, being brought out by the local club.
>
> Mr. Marriott, who leaves a family of two sons and three daughters, has been in ailing health for the past four years. On Friday, Dr. Brown performed an operation upon him for Dropsy, but as already stated he died on Saturday morning, at 62 years of age.

Horse-Drawn Steam Fire Engine
Period About 1871

> The remains will be interred in the Church of England portion of the Cemetery this (Wednesday) morning. The body will be placed on one of the fire engines drawn by four horses, and it is understood that the cortege will be joined by the Mayor, Members of the Sanitary Committee, the Town Clerk, Borough Surveyor, Chief Constable, the Officials engaged in the Corporation Offices, and several Members of the Police Force."

Before the appointment of the next Superintendent of the Fire Brigade, the Fire and Lighting Committees considered the possible formation of a Brigade from Members of the Police Force. Enquiries were made in other towns, and the opinion of the Chief Constable was sought. This new arrangement did not materialise, and the Fire Brigade continued as before, with the Superintendent working under the Borough Surveyor's Department.

On the 29th March, 1883, Sergeant Alonzo Savage was appointed Superintendent at a salary of £50 per year, payable monthly with house coal, gas, water, rates and taxes free, also one suit of clothes per year. A month later he was given an additional post at the same salary, as Inspector for unsound meat cases. The vacancy for a Sergeant caused by Mr. Savage's appointment, was filled by Fireman Singleton who was subsequently promoted.

Horses for drawing fire engines were no longer provided by the hostler at the Bull Hotel but by the Corporation, and were stabled at some convenient place near Tithebarn Street. Two horses were always available in case of fire. It is interesting to know that some consideration was given to the type of horses required by the Brigade, for at a meeting of the Fire and Lighting Committee on 11th September, 1889, it was decided " to obtain two horses of a lighter build for the use of the Fire Brigade." It was not until some years later that accommodation for horses was provided on the Station premises.

Other additions to the Brigade about this time was the purchase of an additional Fire Escape 54 ft. in length at a cost of £70. A jumping sheet was also obtained. The provision of 28 helmets for the firemen was carried out by Messrs. Shand Mason & Company, at a cost of £17 17s. 0d.

The year 1898 produced a report from the Surveyor on the conditions and proposed alterations at the Fire Station. It was well worth recording, in view of the fact that the report was adopted and the proposed alterations carried out in 1900. It also gives some indication as to the layout of the Fire Station which existed from 1852. The report states :—

Report of Borough Surveyor Re Fire Brigade Improvements.

Borough Surveyor's Office, Town Hall,
Preston.
1st February, 1899.

To The Right Worshipful the Mayor and
Members of the Fire and Lighting Sub Committee.

Gentlemen,

At a meeting of this Sub-Committee held on the 20th October last, it was resolved " That the Surveyor prepare and submit a plan and estimate for a proposed extension of the Fire Brigade Station." I have now the honour to present them for your consideration.

The site of the Fire Brigade building is bounded on the North by the Sanitary Offices, on the South and East by buildings belonging to private owners, and on the West by Tithebarn Street. It will thus be seen that the only way of extending the buildings is in the direction of the Brigade Yard.

The present buildings consist of engine house with two small rooms over, and Hose Tower on the North ; Superintendent's house, Four-stalled stable, and small outbuildings on the South side of the Yard ; in each case extending the full width of the site from front to back, with the Station Yard between the two blocks. The Engine House is very low and badly lighted, and the doors being the same height as the ceiling it is impossible to house the machines inside, they have therefore to be drawn out by the men before the horses can be attached to them. The rooms above the engine house are also very low and dark, the roof and floor in very bad condition, and altogether in such a state that it is practically impossible to use them. The hose drying tower is also in very bad condition from the top to about halfway to the base, and from there to the bottom is a flight of stone steps which renders it impossible to dry the hose inside, it has therefore to be hung from the top of the tower and secured to a holdfast at the entrance to the stable, which in the present condition of the tower renders the operation dangerous in a moderate wind, and in wet weather drying is suspended altogether.

The small outbuildings in the Yard are in a very dilapidated condition. The four-stalled stable is at the rear and adjoining the Superintendent's House, and on sanitary grounds alone ought to be removed. The Superintendent's House is also very much out of repair. I have prepared two sets of plans for remodelling and extending the Buildings.

Drawing Marked "A"

By this plan I propose to form a vestibule in the passage of the Superintendent's house, with one door leading forward into the house and another door to the right into the present parlour, which it is pro-

posed to convert into an office and watchroom. There will also be another door connecting the house with the Office for the use of the Superintendent. I have retained the present door leading into the Yard as being very convenient to engine house and stable. It is also intended to pull down the present stable and erect a kitchen on the site to compensate for the partial appropriation of the front room. The whole of the outside of the house to be pointed ,the roof made good, and in every way put in thorough repair. On the upper floor of the house I have provided Bathroom, etc., with all modern arrangements for the use of the Superintendent. I also propose to remodel the Engine House by taking down the outer walls overlooking the yard and fronting to Tithebarn Street, remove the floor and roof, enlarge the Engine House, increasing the area from 940 square feet to 1,270 square feet, the walls inside to be pointed and lime or colour washed, and on the outside, faced with red facing bricks with stone dressings. There is also provided an additional gateway to the street, the one in the yard retained, and these fit up with doors made so as to allow of being opened easily and quickly, and constructed so that the horses can be harnessed to any of the machines inside the engine house without as at present having to be drawn out by the firemen. The building (with the exception of the portion under the men's room) to be open to the roof and well lighted. The proposed four-stalled stable would be in the rear and adjoining the engine house, with direct communication between the two. Over the engine house I have provided a men's room 19 ft. x 15 ft. and over a portion of the stable a bathroom and lavatory for the firemen, and the remaining portion hay-loft, etc. The whole of the building to be well lighted and ventilated. It is proposed to take down the hose tower and rebuild it as shewn on the drawings.

I have also provided for heating the engine house with hot water, the heating chamber being situate under the engine house with entrance from the yard. It would also be a great convenience and materially assist the Brigade when summoned at night, if the buildings were lighted by electricity, to be controlled from the Office, the cost of which I have included in the estimates. The extension of the Engine House renders it necessary to remove the tank which is used when the Brigade is at practice, and this I have provided for in the New Yard. There is also a W.C. and urinal for the use of the men, with manure pit and coal store adjoining. I have shewn a doorway in the wall between the Station Yard and the passage behind. This will prove a great advantage seeing that no less than six of the Brigade live on the opposite side of the passage, thus making them *resident firemen*, and decreasing the average distance of the houses of the whole of the men from the Station from 136 Linear Yards to 104 Linear Yards.

Drawings marked "B"

These are in a great measure similar to those marked 'A' with the exception of the Hose Tower which it is not intended to pull down, but to fit up as described in the previous plans, this will leave the Tower in the middle of the front elevation and between the two gateways in Tithebarn Street. It will, however, not be so convenient as in the first scheme, inasmuch as when the hose has been washed and to enable the men to hand it in the Tower it will be necessary to drag at least two of the machines out of the Engine House into the Yard, and this means expense each time the operation is performed. It will also be much more difficult to dry the hose in fine weather from the outside of the Tower by reason of the intervening roof of the Engine house between the Tower and the Yard necessitating the men climbing on the roof, and thereby risk of damage or accident, in order to get the pipes to the yard level to secure them. Seeing that the saving in first costs by this scheme is so small, and that this is counterbalanced by the extra expense entailed in working, I have to recommend the carrying out of drawings marked " A."

At the present time the Brigade is summoned by the bell on the top of the Tower, this is very unsatisfactory, and at times owing to the direction of the wind and other causes, not heard by some of the firemen, and, as a consequence, only a portion of the Brigade turns up, which is a very serious matter in case of Mill or other large fires. The sounding of the bell has also the effect of arousing the neighbourhood, and on the arrival of the firemen the Station is invariably surrounded by a large crowd who seriously interfere with their movements. To avoid this, and also to summon the Brigade more q ickly, I have included in the estimates, an installation of electric alarms connecting the Station Office with the houses of the firemen, whereby the Superintendent or other person for the time being in charge, can, from the Office summon any individual member, or if necessary, the whole of the Brigade, which enables them to be well on the way to the site of the fire before a crowd has time to assemble.

The present Public Urinal will have to be removed and a site may be found for it either in the Sanitary Yard adjacent or in the Pig Market.

The cost of carrying out the work as shewn on the accompanying drawings I estimate would be as follows :—

DRAWINGS MARKED "A"

	£	s.	d.
Alterations to Engine House, rebuilding Tower, Pulling down and rebuilding Stables, Men's Room, Bath, Lavatory and outbuildings	1,075	0	0
Alterations and repairs to Superintendent's House, New Kitchen, etc., etc.	175	0	0
Repaving Yard, alterations to Footpath, etc.	30	0	0
Heating Apparatus	45	0	0
Electric alarm installation connecting Office with Firemen's Dwellings	165	0	0
Lighting Buildings with Electricity	25	0	0
Refixing Urinal	30	0	0
Total ..	1,545	0	0

DRAWINGS MARKED "B"

	£	s.	d.
Alterations of Engine House, Pulling down and re-building Stable, Men's Room, Bath, Lavatory and outbuildings	1,030	0	0
Alterations and repairs to Superintendent's House, New Kitchen, etc., etc.	175	0	0
Repaving Yard, alterations to Footpath, etc.	30	0	0
Heating Apparatus	45	0	0
Electric Alarm connecting Office with Firemen's Dwellings	165	0	0
Lighting Buildings with Electricity	25	0	0
Refixing Urinal	30	0	0
Total ..	1,500	0	0

The following are the recommendations as to the Equipment and future working of the Brigade :—

	£	s.	d.
Additional Steamer of 750 Gallons capacity	825	0	0
One Hose Reel, Harness, etc.	75	0	0
600 Linear Yards New Hose	100	0	0
60 Pairs Patent Couplings	75	0	0
Rejointing 10 Branches, 10 Uprights, and 8 Goose Necks	25	0	0
Total ..	1,100	0	0

	£	s.	d.
Increase Brigade from 27 to 30 Men	20	0	0
Two Engineers to devote their whole time to Brigade ..	100	0	0
Two Horses kept constantly on the Premises	90	0	0
Increased Annual Cost	210	0	0

Should it at any time be deemed advisable to build a new Central Fire Station with Firemen's Dwellings etc., the present Store Yard between Saul Street and Walker Street would make a capital site having extensive frontage to both Streets.

Trusting this report and the accompanying drawings may be satisfactory to you, and awaiting your further instructions in the matter.

I am, Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

Thomas Cookson.

The extension of the Fire Station was approved at a cost of £1,516 9s. 6d. the Contractor being a Mr. T. B. Garnett. An additional 'Steamer' and other Appliances were also estimated for, the total cost, including the extension to the Fire Station, being £2,645.

The second Shand Mason Fire Engine was acquired in 1900. This machine had a pumping capacity of 450-500 G.P.M. and brought the Appliance strength of the Brigade up to six; Steamers 2, Manuals 1, Hand Escapes 1, Hose Reel Appliances 2. A year later the manual was offered for sale to the Preston R.D.C., but it was turned down and remained at Preston until 1906 when Messrs. Shand Mason & Co., bought it for £10.

The P.R.D.C. submitted a request in July, 1901, for Preston Fire Brigade to attend fires in the following areas :— The Urban Districts of Fulwood, and Leyland, and the Parish Councils of Farington, Penwortham and Longton. The request stated that Preston should not accept any responsibility for protection from fire in these areas, but that they should allow the Brigade to attend fires in such districts and upon such charges as could be arranged, and when the Brigade was not required in Preston.

This request was turned down and it was put on record that the Brigade would not attend fires outside the Borough except to such places regarding which arrangements had been made. The P.R.D.C. continued to make further requests up to 1905 but the Corporation refused to alter their previous decision and again it was recorded this time more specifically that the Steam Fire Engines would not be allowed from the

Borough except to the following places :— Fulwood Workhouse, Barracks, Blind Home, Harris Orphanage, Home for Aged Poor (Little Sisters), St. Vincent's Boys' Home, and Whittingham Asylum.

It is significant to note that in 1902 the number of hydrants had gradually increased and that a definite way of marking them had been developed through the years. This is evident from the fact that on May 5th it was agreed by the Fire and Lighting Committee to ask the Chromographic Enamel Co. Ltd., of Wolverhampton, to supply 952 Fire Hydrant Plates. It is not suggested that this number represents the total hydrants in Preston at this time, but it does indicate the progress which had been made in the supply of water for fire-fighting.

During the years, the responsibilities of Superintendent Savage as Chief of the Fire Brigade had increased. This fact was appreciated by the Committee who, on the 17th March, increased the Superintendent's Salary to £75. (Mr. Savage had previously had his salary increased to £60 three years after his appointment).

He continued to maintain progress in the Brigade, and in June 1905, suggested that the Hand Escape should be converted to enable it to be horsedrawn. The estimated cost was £25. This alteration was carried out, and a new Fire Escape with Chemical Engine was purchased from Messrs. Shand Mason & Company, costing £377 10s. 0d.

About this time Superintendent Savage applied to the Committee asking leave of absence for Sergeant Ellerthorpe and eight men to attend the Lancashire Fire Brigade's Annual Demonstration at Barrow, and that permission be granted for them to take with them the Hose Carriage and Harness. The application was successful.

It is interesting to note that Superintendent Savage owned two houses in Everton Gardens. In 1905 these were sold to the Corporation for £350 as were two more owned by a Mrs. Sarah H. Clarke. The total cost of the four houses was £740. The purchase of these houses was necessary for the further extension of the Fire Station which was estimated to cost £1,117.

A new method of calling the Brigade was installed at the Fire Station shortly after the extension was completed. This provided for individual ringing as well as collective, and was operated by electricity. A control panel was put in the front room of the Superintendent's House, and connected by wires to each Fireman's House where an Electric Bell was installed.

In 1907 Firemen were equipped with Jack-Boots for Fire-Fighting, the Brigade Horses were used for Prison Van work, and an Engineer was appointed to the Brigade. The Short List for this post comprised Messrs. E. Allsup, Robert Salter and William Wareing. E. Allsup was appointed at a wage of 36s. 0d. per week.

In March, 1909, Superintendent Savage retired from the Brigade. He was succeeded by his son, Alonzo, who had been a Member of the Brigade for some years.

Two years later, efforts were made by the Surveyor to provide better access to Mill Lodges so that the Steamers could pass through easily in case of fire. As a further means of obtaining water for Fire purposes, Fire Tanks were installed at five places in the town.

The recent development of the internal combustion engine advanced still further the design of Fire Engines. The use of Horses for drawing the engines was dispensed with, and the Steam Engines used in the operation of the Pumps were no longer required. In view of these developments, Preston changed to Motor Traction in 1914.

At a Meeting of the Fire and Lighting Committee on January 8th, the Surveyor submitted alternative schemes for equipping the Brigade and it was resolved :—

> " that the Streets and Buildings Committee recommend to the Council that application be made to the Local Government Board for their sanction to the borrowing by the Council of the sum of £3,350 for the purpose of purchasing two Motor Fire Engines, One Motor Cycle Fire Engine, and One Motor Ambulance Carriage."

The application being granted, it was resolved on the 11th March, that Messrs. Merryweather and Leyland Motors Limited, be invited to give competitive trial to their respective Motor Fire Engines.

However, before the test took place, the tender of Merryweather & Sons Ltd., for two Fire Engines at a cost of £2,400 was accepted, but in the meantime, Leyland Motors Ltd., protested vigorously against this procedure, so that at a meeting of the Council on the 30th March, the previous resolution was withdrawn.

Merryweather's and Leyland Motors Limited, were again invited to compete at Preston. The President of the Institute of Mechanical Engineers was asked to nominate an independent Expert Mechanical Engineer to advise on the most suitable machine.

On the 15th May, 1914, the test of Leyland's took place at Preston and the expert, Captain H. Riall Sankey, R.E. (Retd.), M.Inst.C.E., submitted his report. It was subsequently resolved on the 15th June, that one Leyland and one Merryweather should be purchased, yet by June 25th, a final decision was made that Two Merryweathers should be purchased. To complete the original recommendation by the Surveyor, tenders were accepted in October for the purchase of one Motor Ambulance from Merigold Bros., at a cost of £684 and a Motor Cycle Fire Engine costing £180 from the Lancashire Motor and Engineering Co. Ltd.

Six Members of Preston Fire Brigade were amongst those who died whilst serving with the Armed Forces during the first World War 1914-18, and a memorial to their memory stands in the Fire Station today. From the civilian standpoint the dangers of War were less severe, and were chiefly from hostile aircraft which ventured over the coasts in spasmodic raids to drop bombs indiscriminately, and start fires of serious proportions.

In 1916 the Fire and Lighting Sub Committee considered measures to be taken in the event of outbreaks of fire caused by hostile aircraft. The Chairman also reported that Messrs. Horrockses, Crewdson & Co. Ltd., were prepared to place their Fire Engine and Staff at the disposal of the Corporation. The measures considered were approved.

Wartime always brings to the fore the additional hazards which attend the filling of ammunition, and the 1914-1918 war was no exception. A National Filling Factory had been established for some time at Morecambe, and in the latter part of 1917 a serious explosion occurred which brought Fire Brigades from almost every district in Lancashire. Preston responded with an Appliance. Superintendent Savage with seven men was in charge, and they were amongst the early arrivals. Whatever individual efforts were carried out during this disaster, it is quite clear that the men from Preston performed their allotted duties in the best traditions of the Service. The following is a copy of a letter which was received by the Town Clerk and which concerns this incident at Morecambe:—

COPY.

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS

From O.H.M.S. Munitions Department, London.
5th October, 1917.

To Town Clerk, Preston.

I have heard with admiration of the conspicuous services rendered by the detachment of the Preston Fire Brigade at the fire at the National Filling Factory at Morecambe. I desire to convey to you my thanks for the ready response made to the call for assistance.

I desire also to convey to you and through you to the Officer in Command and all ranks concerned, my appreciation of high qualities of energy, courage, and endurance displayed by the detachment in the face of danger resulting from frequent explosions, and my great gratification at the successful results of their arduous efforts which were instrumental in saving a large portion of the Factory from destruction.

WINSTON CHURCHILL.

In consequence of these efforts, Alonzo Savage was awarded the King's Police and Fire Services Medal on May 13th, 1918. The Committee also appreciated the prestige bestowed on the town by the efforts of their Fire Brigade, and demonstrated this by making a grant of £10 to the Superintendent and £3 each to the seven men of the Brigade who attended.

In June of this same year, a serious fire broke out at Messrs. Wood Milne Ltd., in River Street, Preston, and it is regrettable that during the fire-fighting operations Fireman J. Chippendale lost his life. Superintendent Savage submitted his report on the fire and the circumstances which resulted in Fireman Chippendale's death.

A second Merryweather Fire Engine was purchased in 1919, but owing to increased costs the new price was raised to £1,650, a difference of £450 on the original estimate. Further additions were also made to the Brigade in 1920. The permanent staff was increased by appointing two firemen and two motor drivers. The purchasing of dwelling houses for firemen, a chassis for new hose carriage at £1,100, one electric lighting set for fire engine £35, were also put into effect. It was also recommended that the horses belonging to the Brigade should be sold.

Because of the appointment of Motor Drivers at this time, the question of pay was raised by the United Vehicle Workers' Union and they requested that motor drivers in the Brigade should be graded as Firemen and receive Firemen's rates of pay. The request was not agreed to at this particular time.

Some trouble was experienced with a Merryweather in 1922. A defect in the engine resulted in Messrs. Merryweather & Sons offering a new engine for £400 guaranteed for twelve months. In the interim period the Brigade were to use an exhibition engine.

In 1925 a new Daimler Ambulance was purchased from Messrs. Merigold's, Preston, at a cost of £980. This year also ushered in the Fire Brigade's Pension Act which was followed by a report of a Committee appointed by the Home Secretary, on the bonus pay and conditions of service of Firemen. The Town Clerk submitted a copy of this report to the Council, along with a letter he had received from the Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union asking for improved wages and conditions of service for Members of Preston Fire Brigade.

It was resolved that the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Mr. Councillor Herbert, with the officials be appointed a Sub Committee to consider the reorganisation of the Fire Brigade, and report their recommendations to the Streets and Buildings Committee. The report was submitted but consideration adjourned.

The number of personnel attached to the Brigade in 1926 was as follows :—

WHOLETIME

1 Superintendent
1 Second Officer
3 Branchmen
1 Steam F.E. Attendant
1 Horse Driver
4 Motor Drivers

AUXILIARIES

14 (in case of emergency)

Consideration was given to the housing accommodation for members of the Brigade, included in the proposed erection of a new Fire Station. Meanwhile another Fire Engine was purchased from Leyland Motors Limited, with a pumping capacity of 300/400 G.P.M., and in keeping with the increased number of petrol engines now in use by the Brigade, a Petrol Pump was installed in the Fire Station Yard.

The Committee again considered the report on hours, pay and conditions of service of Fire Brigade Personnel, and resolved that :—

(1) Motor Drivers be re-engaged as Driver Firemen.
(2) Staff increased from 11 to 15 (1 Engineer Driver, 1 Driver Fireman and two Firemen).
(3) Continuous duty system adopted :—Hours of Duty, six days per week including Sundays, 24 Hours per day. One full day of 24 hours leave, plus six hours leave of absence to be arranged with Superintendent.
(4) Appointments, made after advertising by a Sub-Committee of the Streets and Buildings Committee, be subject to a Medical Examination.
(5) Appointments made for a six months period (probationary).
(6) Old Chemical Engine, Hose Carriage, and the two horses to be disposed of.
(7) The Superintendent of Fire Brigade to be co-opted to act in conjunction with Police authority with regard to inspection of Fire Appliances in Theatres.
(8) Auxiliaries to be appointed from the Corporation Service where possible.

A year later, the appointments subsequent upon this resolution were as follows :—

Engineer Driver	..	Mr. S. Savage
Driver Fireman	..	Mr. R. Cartmell
Fireman	..	Mr. F. Yates
Fireman	..	Mr. F. Slater

Several attempts have been made in the last 30 years or so to erect a new Fire Station. In 1927, the Borough Surveyor was instructed to prepare a scheme for the erection of such a building with housing accommodation for firemen. The site chosen was between St. George's Road, Deepdale Road, Holmrook Road, and St. Paul's Road. After the Committee had inspected the site, the scheme was evidently abandoned, although it was considered again in December, 1929, and in April of 1930 the Borough surveyor was requested to prepare plans and estimates for the new building.

The years of service completed by the two Superintendents' Savage must be one of the longest served by father and son as Chief Officers in one Brigade. A total of 48 years, from 1883-1931, covers the service of two generations of Chief Officers whose name became a household word. The name of Savage continued in the Brigade until quite recently. Mr. S. Savage was appointed an Engineer Driver in 1927, and by 1928 he was made Third Officer, and continued in this capacity until his retirement in 1942.

When Alonzo Savage retired in 1931 his place was finally filled by Mr. Thomas Hill. It was on January 6th that the vacancy was filled by the appointment of Mr. John Smith of Bootle, but at a meeting of the Appointments Committee on the 5th March, this decision was rescinded, and on the 18th May, Mr. Thomas Hill was elected Superintendent of the Fire Brigade. Later in the same year a vacancy arose for Second Officer which was given to Mr. James Hurst of Radcliffe.

Mr. Hurst did not remain long in Preston Fire Brigade, for in 1935 he was successful in being appointed to Chief Officer for the City of Bath. This departure of Second Officer Hurst brought another short list of applicants for the advertised post, and amongst them was Mr. David Kernohan, Second Officer of Bury Fire Brigade. Mr. Kernohan was the successful candidate, his appointment dating from September, 1935.

Mr. Thomas Hill during his period as Superintendent, brought about many improvements in the Brigade. More men were brought into the Service on a full time basis and Auxiliaries were no longer employed.

This change undoubtedly put the Brigade on a higher standing. In addition, Superintendent Hill advocated more up-to-date Machines to replace the Merryweather, and during the four-year period ended 1938, the following machines were purchased :—

One Leyland Metz Turntable Ladder ..	£3,228	1935
One 20 H.P. Armstrong Siddeley Ambulance	£825	1936
One Dennis Trailer Pump	£390	1936

One Leyland Fire Engine—600/800 G.P.M. with Limousine Body	£1,945	1937
One Leyland Fire Engine—600/800 G.P.M. with Limousine Body	£1,945	1938

Superintendent Hill created two posts in the Brigade for Station Officers. It was pointed out at the time that such a course was desirable in order to provide adequate cover in the absence of the Second or Third Officer, and so Fireman Watmough and Fireman Gardner were promoted to Station Officer Rank in February, 1934.

CHAPTER V.

The National Fire Service. Our Brigade Today.

FROM the year 1937 to 1939 the threat of war hung over Europe, and preparations were carried out to combat the expected results of air attack. Recruiting was started for a number of Services grouped under the Branch of Air Raid Precautions (A.R.P.). Police and Fire Brigades also operated in liaison with A.R.P. and the Auxiliary Fire Service (A.F.S.), was inaugurated.

The functioning of the A.F.S. under blitz conditions left much to be desired, and it became obvious that something drastic had to be done. Accordingly, the Government formed the National Fire Service under the National Fire Service (General) Regulations, 1941—Statutory Rules and Orders No. 1143, 1941 by virtue of the Fire Service (Emergency Regulations) Act, 1941.

This organisation was based on the 12 Civil Defence Regions and the Regional Commissioner was made responsible by the Secretary of State. To each Region a Chief Regional Fire Officer was appointed by the Secretary of State to assist the Regional Commissioner to exercise his functions under the Regulations. The Chief Regional Fire Officer obtained his authority by delegation from the Regional Commissioner.

Regions were split into Area or Fire Forces and in charge of each was placed a Fire Force Commander. The Fire Force Area was the principal area for effective administration. The main object was to place one Officer in Control with a definite chain of command over all Fire Service Units in the area and an appropriate system of communications throughout that area.

For the purpose of mobilising, reinforcing, and carrying out operations, a chain of operational control was set up. This chain of control started at the Home Office Fire Control—a room connected by telephone with the Headquarters of every Regional Fire Control Room.

There were 43 Fire Force Areas in England and Wales, and six in Scotland, and these were determined on geographical conditions. Their boundaries followed those of Local Authorities.

The smallest area for effective administration was the Division which was set up on a basis of 100 pumps. This figure varied slightly, for strategical reasons, and the Division was in charge of one Officer—the Divisional Officer.

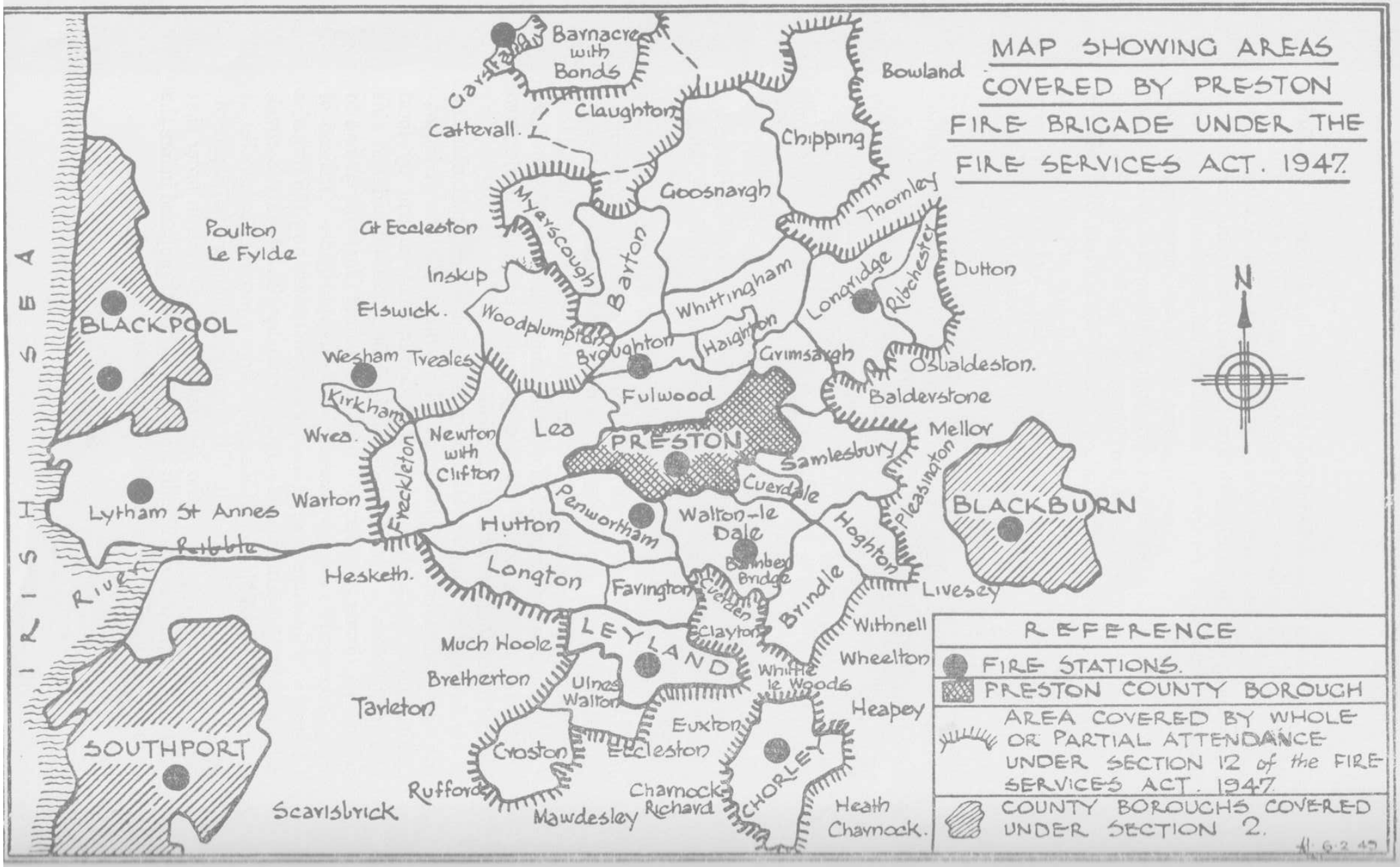
Divisions were sub-divided for operational control into Sub-Divisions of which there were two or more to a Division. The Sub-Division was based generally on the peace-time Fire Station. Then finally there were the Stations themselves, (based on the old Sub Station principle), and to a Station perhaps there was attached an action Station.

This brief description gives some idea of the changes which overtook Fire Brigades in 1941, and it will be appreciated that such a change affected the Senior Officers of the Country's Fire Brigades. With the setting up of this new organisation, Senior Officers had to apply for appointments which in most cases brought a change of District or even County. In Preston the changes were such that Chief Officer Hill was appointed Divisional Officer and moved to take command at Accrington, whilst Second Officer Kernohan was also appointed Divisional Officer and remained at Preston. Other Members of the Brigade were moved to different Stations which virtually brought to an end the life of Preston Fire Brigade for the first time in its history.

Chief Officer Hill remained in the N.F.S. until November, 1943, when he was discharged on medical grounds with the rank of Company Officer. Second Officer Kernohan, now Divisional Officer, was moved to another command in 1942, with the Rank, Deputy Fire Force Commander, but in 1944 he returned to Preston as Divisional Officer. Later, he was moved to Southport to take command of both Southport and Preston Divisions, and eventually returned to Preston as Officer in Charge of the Tithebarn Street Station, with the Rank of Column Officer, in 1945.

With the end of the war in 1945 some of the original Members of the Preston Fire Brigade returned, but it took perhaps another eighteen months before all were back. Considerable changes had taken place during the life of the N.F.S. The hours of duty had changed into a shift system which required more men, and the number of appliances had been increased by one Pump Escape, and one Salvage Tender, two Light Trailer Pumps were also available.

In 1947 the Fire Services Act was passed, which superseded the war time nationalised service, repealed all other previous Acts concerning Fire Brigades, and replaced Government control by local authority control. Fire Brigades had to be re-established and this meant that former members of Brigades including Chief Officers had to apply once again for appointments in the new Brigades. Instead of 1,400 such establishments as before the war, there were now 135 Brigades between County Boroughs and County Councils. The County Borough of Preston selected Mr. David Kernohan from a formidable short list as the Chief Officer designate of its Fire Brigade, in October, 1947, a procedure carried out by Fire Authorities under the new Act, in order that their establishments could be drawn up and schemes prepared before the appointed day, which was the 1st April, 1948.


MAP SHOWING AREAS COVERED BY PRESTON FIRE BRIGADE UNDER THE FIRE SERVICES ACT. 1947.
IRISH SEA
Barnacre with Bonds
Bowland
Claughton
Catterall.
Chipping
Goosnargh
Myerscough
Barton
Thornley
Poulton Le Fylde
Gt Eccleston
Inskip
Elswick.
Woodplumpton
Broughton
Whittingham
Haighton
Longridge
Ribchester
Dutton
Grimsargh
Osbaldeston.
Baldersone
Wesham
Treales
Kirkham
Wrea.
Fulwood
Lea
Newton with Clifton
Freckleton
PRESTON
Samlesbury
Mellor
Pleasington
BLACKPOOL
BLACKBURN
Lytham St Annes
Warton
Penwortham
Cuerdale
Walton-le Dale
Hutton
Ribble
Hesketh.
Longton
Farington
Bamber Bridge
Hoghton
Brindle
Livesey
Much Hoole
LEYLAND
Clayton
Withnell
Wheelton
Bretherton
Tarleton
Ulnes Walton
Whittle le Woods
Heapey
Euxton
SOUTHPORT
Croston
Eccleston
CHORLEY
Rufford
Scarisbrick
Mawdesley
Charnock Richard
Heath Charnock.
N
REFERENCE
FIRE STATIONS.
PRESTON COUNTY BOROUGH
AREA COVERED BY WHOLE OR PARTIAL ATTENDANCE UNDER SECTION 12 of the FIRE SERVICES ACT. 1947.
COUNTY BOROUGHS COVERED UNDER SECTION 2.

A Second Officer was appointed in January, 1948, so also were other Officers according to the Establishment Scheme, which provided for the following :—

One Chief Officer.
One Deputy Chief Officer.
Two Station Officers.
Five Sub Officers (One Fire Prevention Officer).
Four Leading Firemen.
Forty-Eight Firemen.
Eight Watchroom Attendant Firemen.
Two Administrative Staff.

a total of 71 Whole time Personnel.

This is the present Establishment of the Preston Fire Brigade which is a body of men well trained and well equipped for the task of preserving life and property from fire.

It is a far cry from 1818 when our Brigade was first established, but it can be said with confidence that Preston Fire Brigade today ranks high among the Brigades of this Country for efficiency and equipment. Our predecessors were concerned solely with fire extinction, but the present day Fire Brigade is also concerned with Fire Prevention, Fire Salvage, and Special Services, which cover a variety of operations, from pumping out flooded basements to rescuing animals in distress.

The Fire Brigade as established under the Fire Services Act, 1947, operates in conjunction with other local Brigades, namely, Lancashire County Council, the Boroughs of Blackburn, Blackpool and Southport, in supplying or receiving assistance at unusually large fires. It also provides fire cover for adjoining County Districts by despatching a Pump Escape on receipt of a fire call. The precise set up of Preston Fire Brigade in the year 1952 may be summarised under the following :—

LOCAL AUTHORITY COUNCIL
FIRE BRIGADE COMMITTEE
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER
DEPUTY CHIEF OFFICER

'A' WATCH			'B' WATCH
Stn. Officer (*Operational*)	Stn. Officer (*Fire Prevention*)		Stn. Officer (*Operational*)
Sub Officer	Sub Officer	Sub Officer	Sub Officer
Ldg. Fireman	Ldg. Fireman	Ldg. Fireman	Ldg. Fireman
24 Firemen		24 Firemen	

8 Watchroom Attendant Firemen
2 Civilian Cooks (Part time)
2 Administrative Staff

APPLIANCES

Major Pumps	2
Pump Escape	1
Turntable Ladder	1
Tenders	2
Trailer Pumps	4
Utility Vans	2
Staff Car	1

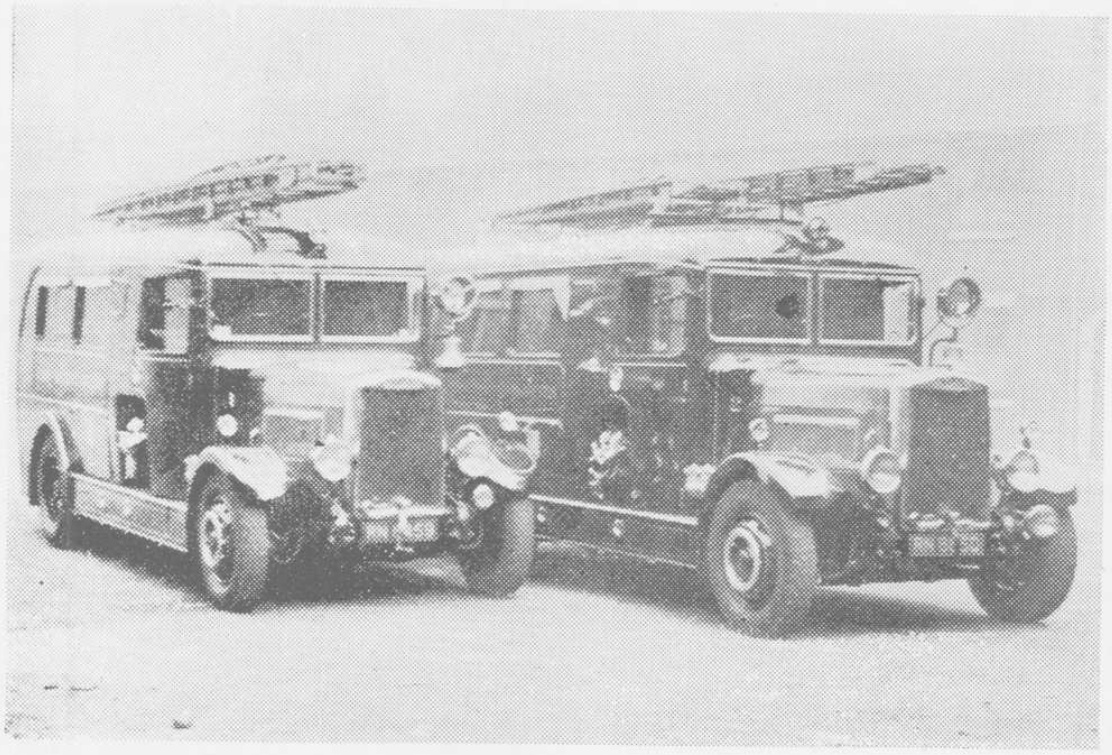
Short-wave wireless (operating through a joint scheme with Police)

Wireless Stations :	Sub Control	1
	Mobile	3
	(1 Major Pump)	
	(1 Pump Escape)	
	(1 Staff Car)	

Breathing Apparatus Sets	10
Oxy-Acetylene Sets	2
Foam Generators	1
Hose, Total Length	20,720 ft.
Fire Hydrants	2,429
Fire Tanks	30
Total Calls received (1951/52)	414

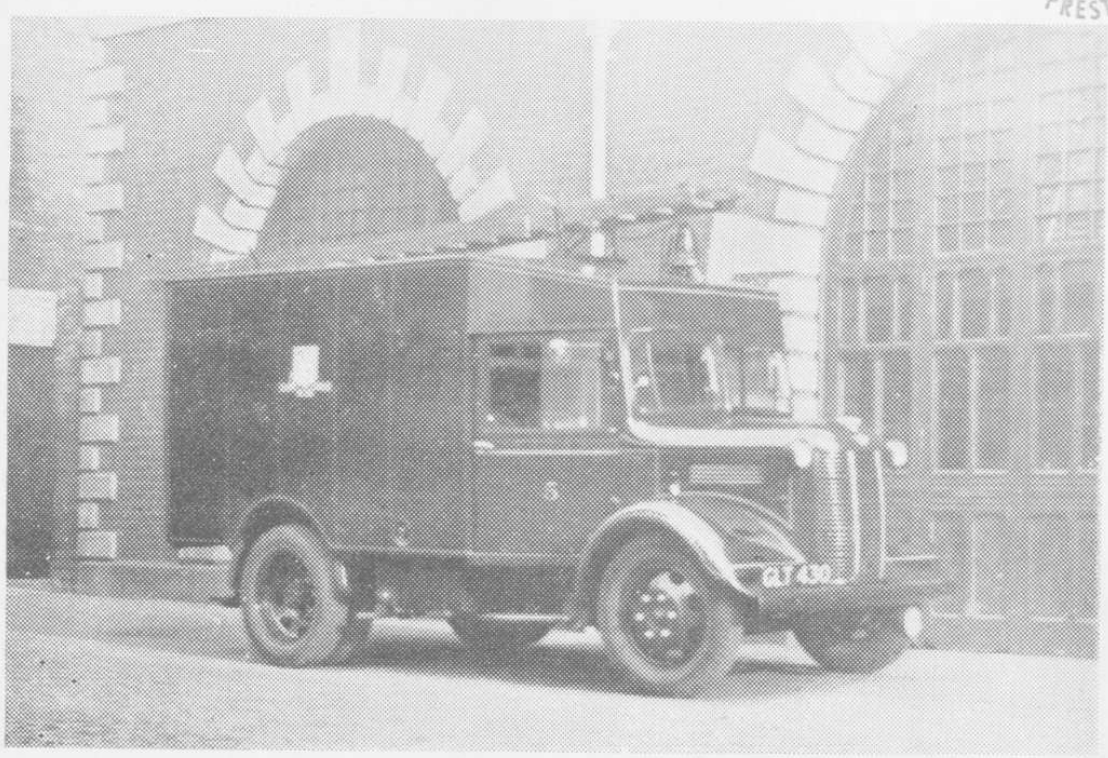
It is hoped that what has been written may prove interesting to the layman as well as to the fireman. Fire Brigades the world over are an evil necessity. They only come into operation when and where required, and it is regrettable that they have not as yet received the prestige and respect which they deserve. Those people who have suffered loss by fire realise what the assistance of the Fire Brigade means, and it is unfortunate that fires must occur before the public fully appreciate such a valiant and public service.

Leyland-Metz Turntable Ladder (100ft.)



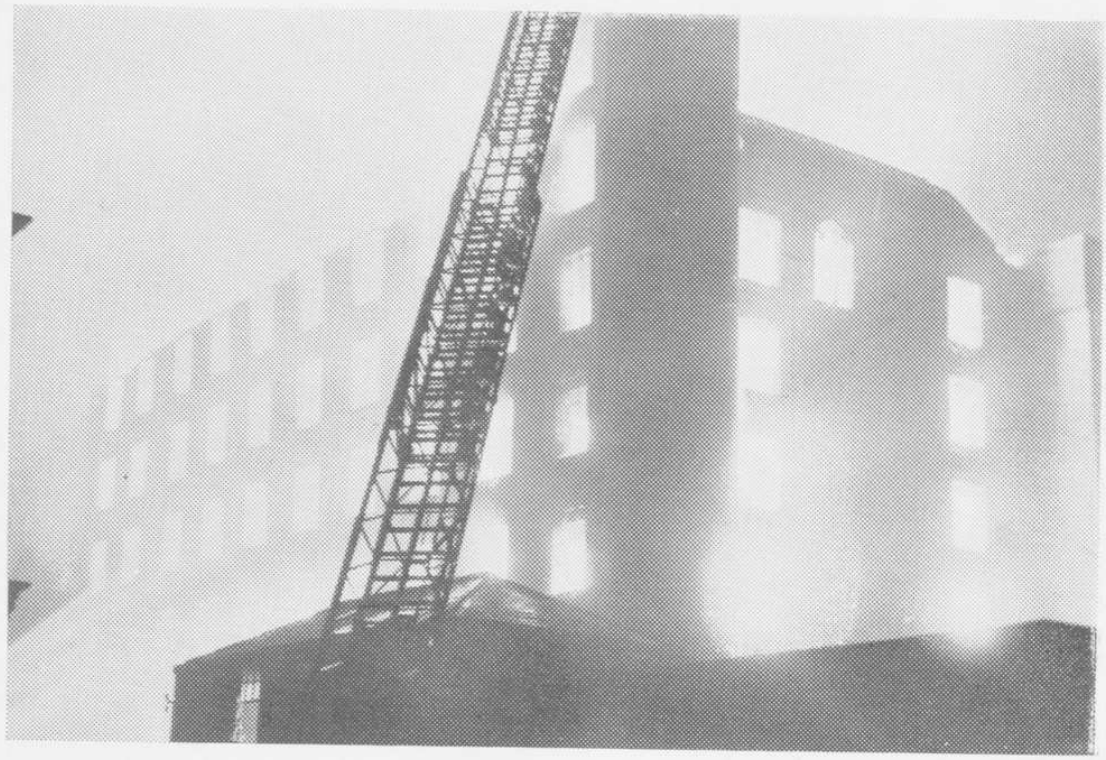
MAJOR APPLIANCES (700 *g.p.m.*)

PUMP ESCAPE (300 *g.p.m.*)

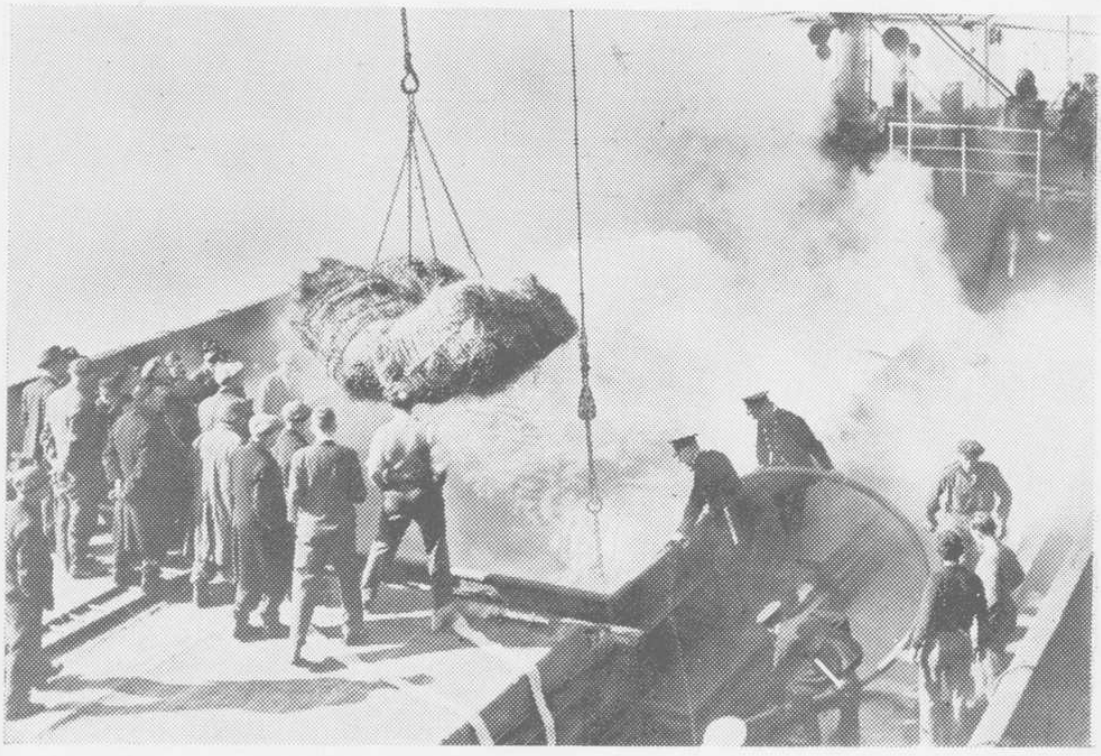


SALVAGE TENDER

MARGERISON'S SOAP WORKS (*5th November* 1948.)



OXHEYS MILL (*20th December*, 1948.)



S.S. "BODO" PRESTON DOCKS (*17th March* 1949.)

Appendix "A"

A List of the Names of Officers in command of Preston Fire Brigade since it was first established in 1818.

Mr. W. Elsworth	1818—1837
Mr. Bradley	1837—1847
Mr. Graham	1847—1854
Mr. H. Marriott	1854—1883
Mr. A. Savage (I)	1883—1909
Mr. A. Savage (II)	1909—1931
Mr. T. Hill	1931—1941
N.F.S.	1941—1947
Mr. D. Kernohan	1947—