



CITY OF DUNDEE

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# ANNUAL REPORT

UPON THE WORK OF THE

Dundee City Fire Brigade,

BY

J. S. WEIR, Firemaster,

FOR THE

Year Ending 31st December, 1904.

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JANUARY 1905.

F/D/1/1/1



FIREMASTER'S OFFICE,  
WEST BELL STREET,  
DUNDEE, 18th January, 1905.

*To the Honourable  
The Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Town Council,  
of the City of Dundee.*

MY LORD AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present the First Annual Report on the work of the City Fire Brigade, for the year ending 31st December, 1904.

The Brigade received 146 calls to fires or supposed fires.

Of this number :—

119 were to Fires in the City.

5 „ „ beyond the City boundary.

7 „ „ Chimney Fires.

15 „ „ False Alarms.

84 Calls were received between 6 p.m. and 6 am.

62 Calls were received between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.

On 244 days there were no calls.

„ 103 „ there was one „

„ 14 „ there were two „

„ 5 „ „ three „

The number of Calls shows an increase of 49 as compared with the previous twelve months.

The loss occasioned by fires within the City is estimated at £32,035 8s 11d, the estimated value of property at risk being £197,140.

The loss occasioned by fires beyond the City boundary is estimated at £1,805, and the value of property at risk at £13,380.



For extinguishing fires within the City the amount recoverable from Proprietors and Occupiers where fires have occurred is £521 12s. For the previous year the amount was £163 6s 3d, showing an increase of £358 5s 9d.

For the attendance of the Brigade to 5 fires beyond the City boundary the amount recoverable is £61 3s. For the previous year the amount was £121 6s 3d, showing a decrease of £60 3s 3d.

The nett cost of the Department for the Financial year, ending 15th May, 1904, was £1,557 6s 1d, for the previous year the cost was £1,705 7s 9d, showing a decrease of £148 1s 8d. The average cost of the Department before the Permanent Staff was instituted was about £900 per annum.

Six of the City fires resulted in considerable loss. The following may be classed as serious, viz :—

On the 8th Feb., at 10.36 p.m a call was received to a Draper's shop, Wellgate. Shop and contents severely damaged by Fire, Smoke and Water. Estimated loss about £1,000. Property at risk £7,300.

On the 4th May, at 4.4 p.m., a call was received to a Jute Warehouse, Trades Lane. Warehouse and contents severely damaged by Fire and Water. Estimated loss £10,750. Property at risk £16,750.

On the same evening at 9.30 p.m., a second call was received to a Chemist's shop, Overgate. Shop and contents severely damaged by Fire, Water, and Wreckage. Estimated loss £500. Property at risk £3,000.

On the same evening at 10.10 p.m., a third call was received to a large Jute Mill and Factory, Polepark. Fortunately in this case the damage was only about £100. Property at risk considerable.

On the 5th May, at 10.45 a.m., a call was received to a Jute Warehouse, at Kemback Street, Arbroath Road. Building completely destroyed, walls bursting out and falling down owing to the expansion of the jute. Contents severely damaged by Fire and Wreckage. Estimated loss, £3,350. Property at risk, £9,350.

On the 17th May, at 7.4 p.m., a call was received to a Boot and Shoe Factory, Brewery Lane, Polepark. Building and contents severely damaged by Fire, Smoke, and Water. Estimated loss £2,800. Property at risk, £6,200.

On the 4th June, 4.35 p.m., a call was received to a Jute Warehouse, Eastern Wharf, Harbour. Warehouse completely destroyed, walls bursting out and falling down. Contents severely damaged by Fire and Water. Estimated loss £5,500. Property at risk £12,350.

On the 15th July, at 8.35 p.m., a call was received to a Rope and Twine Spinner's Works, Step Row, Perth Road. Building and contents severely damaged by Fire, Water, and Wreckage. Estimated loss about £1,000. Property at risk £6,065.

Several large places of business and works have introduced the May Oatway Automatic Fire Alarm System of fire detection into their premises, and are in communication with the Central Fire Station. The system had only been a few days fitted up in a large Factory packed with inflammable material when a fire broke out. I have no hesitation in saying that if it had not been for the prompt call by the May Oatway Fire Alarm System the damage would have been serious. In this case the damage was only £25. Although we received a message by telephone from the premises on fire, the Brigade were on the scene and the hose laid out before the telephonic message was received.

In one case a man was sent to prison for 45 days for setting fire to his house at Lower Pleasance.

In another case a man, for attempting to set fire to business premises in the City, was ordered to find caution to the extent of 50s or suffer twenty days imprisonment.

The only burning accident which came under the notice of the Department was that of a woman who was severely burned about the hands in attempting to extinguish a fire in her dwelling-house. She was sent to the Royal Infirmary for treatment. Several other burning accidents occurred in the City but were not reported to this Department.

I regret to mention that a theatre manager wilfully turned out the Brigade. He was brought before the Sheriff and fined £1, in addition to having all the expense in connection with the turn out to pay.



The services of 4 Auxiliary Firemen at the Central Station were dispensed with, and 2 Permanent men added to the Staff.

The strength of the Brigade is now as under:—

- 1 Firemaster.
- 1 Deputy Firemaster.
- 1 Engineer.
- 1 Assistant Engineer.
- 4 Firemen.
- 2 Coachmen.
- 14 Auxiliary Firemen.

There are 3 Fire Stations:—

- CENTRAL, West Bell Street.
- WESTERN, Bank Street, Lochee.
- NORTHERN, Union Street, Hilltown.

The plant consists of:—

- 2 Steam Fire Engines, 350 gallons capacity.
- 1 Manual Engine (obsolete, not used).
- 1 70 feet Horsed Fire Escape.
- 1 Horsed Hose Tender.
- 1 General Service Waggon.
- 1 Hand Hose Reel.
- 4 Hand Pumps.
- 14 Stand Pipes.
- 23 Branch Pipes.
- 6 Scaling Ladders.
- 2 15 feet Pompier Ladders and Belts.
- 4 Horses belonging to the Department.
- 8,300 yards Canvas Hose, 2½ in. in diameter.

The Hose Couplings and gear at Central Station have been altered from the Screw Thread to Instantaneous Couplings—all made in the City.

Several structural alterations have been carried out at the Station which have added to the efficiency of the Department.

The Permanent Staff have been regularly employed during the working hours, keeping the plant in good order and making new gear such as Scaling Ladders, Jumping Sheets, Canvas Dams, and other necessary apparatus, in addition to executing all the Painter work and repairs about the Station, Inspecting Street Hydrants and putting up new Indicating plates for same. I may also mention that a considerable amount of work has been done by the Staff for the Police Department.

During the year 17 Single Outlet Valve Hydrants have been laid where new water mains have been put down, and 15 defective Hydrants have been cut out and replaced by Valve Hydrants.

SPECIAL SERVICES.—294 turns of duty have been performed by the Permanent and Auxiliary Staffs since 8th August last at theatres and places of amusement, in each case the services being paid for by the proprietors. In addition, all the theatres are regularly inspected from the point of view of public safety, and the employees thereat instructed in the use of the fire appliances.

The Permanent and Auxiliary firemen have been regularly drilled and instructed in the use of the fire appliances.

There have been 5 cases of injury to firemen whilst engaged in the execution of their duty:—

Fireman D. Young of the Permanent Staff became overpowered by smoke at Trades Lane fire and was removed to the Royal Infirmary in an unconscious condition, where he was detained for one day. He was incapacitated from duty for 14 days.

Fireman Beats of the Auxiliary Staff, at the same fire, became overpowered by smoke and had to be removed home in an unconscious condition, where he soon recovered.

Fireman D. Young of the Permanent Staff was injured about the head and back at a fire at Bellfield Lane, and was removed to the Royal Infirmary in an unconscious condition, where he was detained for three days and incapacitated from duty for 7 days.

Fireman Jackson of the Auxiliary Staff was severely injured about the abdomen by falling from a ladder at fire at Eastern Wharf. He was removed home and incapacitated from duty for 14 days.

Fireman A. Strachan of the Permanent Staff was severely cut on the right wrist at a fire in Overgate. He was unfit for active duty for 7 days.

It gives me great pleasure to mention that the conduct of the Staff has been exemplary, and they have carried out their duties in a most satisfactory manner, and, I trust, to the satisfaction of the Committee.

The year's operations have again demonstrated the fact that a fully equipped Fire Station in the north end of the City is much required. A large proportion of the outbreaks reported occurred in the higher parts



of the City. In dealing with these as well as with many of the fires in the eastern and Lochee districts such a Station would have been invaluable. The difficulty in regard to these fires arises not from the distance from the Central Station, but owing to the uphill nature of the nearest thoroughfares which renders these impossible for the Brigade to ascend with any degree of speed, and a big detour is necessary to reach the outbreak. An illustration of the existing danger was seen in the outbreak in Lorimer Street, in November, when human life and much valuable property was imperilled. The Brigade in order to reach the scene of the outbreak had to travel by way of Bell Street, Victoria Road, Dens Road, Moncur Crescent, and Loons Road, and only reached its destination about thirteen minutes after the Call was received. Residenters in the higher parts of the City have not the same sense of security of protection from the Fire Brigade as those in the centre or lower parts, and are thereby exposed to considerable risks which would be reduced to the lowest minimum were an efficient Station substituted for the present antiquated and unsatisfactory premises in Union Street.

In conclusion, I beg to express my hearty thanks to the Convener and members of the Police Committee for their valuable assistance and their courtesy, as well as to the Chief Constable, Officers, and men, the Water Engineer, Burgh Engineer, Electrical Engineer, and Gas Manager, and their subordinates for the assistance rendered at fires within the City.

I annex Tabular statements showing:—

- I.—Causes of Fires and description of Property.
- II.—Appliances used to extinguish Fires.
- III.—Number of Fires with estimated loss.
- IV.—Calls received and Appliances used by each Station.
- V.—List of Stations with strength of Staff and Appliances kept at each Station.
- VI.—Diagram showing positions of fires.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

J. S. WEIR, *Firemaster.*

DESCRIPTION OF FIRES OCCURRING IN THE CITY	Spirit Vapour in contact with Naked Light.	Spark from Chimney Fire.	Spontaneous.	Spark from Fire.	Upsetting of Paraffin Oil Lamps.	Window Curtains coming in contact with Gas Jet.	Unknown.	Total Fires Attended.	
								Within the City.	Without the City.
Aerated Water Manuf.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Bakers and Confection.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..
Boot and Shoe Factor.	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
Basket Manufacturers.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..
Banks .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Butchers .. .. .	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..
Cycle Dealers .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..
Cellars .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	..
Calenders .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Chemists .. .. .	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	2	..
Dairy Farms .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Drying Jute .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	2	..
Drapers and Milliners	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
Dwelling Houses .. ..	..	2	..	2	..	2	1	35	..
Farm Steading .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Firewood Factory .. ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..
Fried Fish Shops .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..
Foundries .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Grocers and Spirit Merch.	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	3	..
Hairdressers .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Hotels and Restaurants	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Ironmongers and Oil ..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	5	..
Joiners and Cabinetm.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Jute Warehouses .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	3	..
Jute Mills .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	2	..
Laundries .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Offices .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..
Public Houses .. .. .	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	2	..
Plumbers .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
Provision Merchants ..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..
Rag Stores .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
Railway Embankmen ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	..
Rope and Twine Wor.	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	3	..
Shooting Gallery .. ..	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	1	..
Sheds .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	12	..
Stationers .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..
Shuttle Makers .. .. .	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..
Store Rooms .. .. .	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	3	..
Stables and Coachhou.	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	3	..
Stack Yards .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	2	1
Tenements .. .. .	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Woollen Warehouse ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Wire Workers .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Waste Stores .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	..
Yards .. .. .	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	..
WITHIN THE CITY	1	4	2	6	1	2	17	119	..
WITHOUT THE CITY	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	..	5
TOTALS	1	4	2	6	1	2	22	124	5



TABLE I—CAUSES OF FIRE AND DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY.

DESCRIPTION OF PREMISES IN WHICH FIRES OCCURRED.	Serious.	Burning Rubbish.	Children Playing with Fire.	Defective Flues.	Defective Fireplaces.	Defective Electric Fittings.	Friction of Machinery.	Gas Explosions.	Goods coming in contact with Gas Jet.	Hot Ashes.	Incendiarism, Supposed.	Jute falling on Matches.	Light thrown down carelessly.	Overheating of Flues.	Overheating of Gas Stove.	Rats Upsetting Matches.	Spirit Vapour in contact with Naked Light.	Spark from Chimney Fire.	Spontaneous.	Spark from Fire.	Upsetting of Paraffin Oil Lamps.	Window Curtains coming in contact with Gas Jet.	Unknown.	Total Fires Attended.	
																								Within the City.	Without the City.
Aerated Water Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2
Bakers and Confectioners	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2
Boot and Shoe Factory	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2
Basket Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	2
Banks	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Butchers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
Cycle Dealers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
Cellars	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Calenders	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Chemists	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	2
Dairy Farms	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
Drying Jute	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Drapers and Milliners	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	2
Dwelling Houses	...	...	1	2	12	...	...	1	...	2	1	...	9	...	...	...	...	2	...	2	...	2	1	35	3
Farm Steading	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Firewood Factory	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Fried Fish Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	2
Foundries	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Grocers and Spirit Merchants	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	3
Hairdressers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Hotels and Restaurants	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Ironmongers and Oil Merchants	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	2	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	...
Joiners and Cabinetmakers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Jute Warehouses	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...
Jute Mills	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...
Laundries	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Offices	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...
Public Houses	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Plumbers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...
Provision Merchants	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Rag Stores	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...
Railway Embankments	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...
Rope and Twine Works	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...
Shooting Gallery	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...
Sheds	...	...	...	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12	...
Stationers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Shuttle Makers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	...
Store Rooms	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	3	...
Stables and Coachhouses	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	...
Stack Yards	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
Tenements	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Woollen Warehouse	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Wire Workers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Waste Stores	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...
Yards	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	3
WITHIN THE CITY	6	3	2	10	14	1	4	2	1	8	7	1	27	2	2	2	1	4	2	6	1	2	17	119	
WITHOUT THE CITY	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5		5
TOTALS	6	3	2	10	14	1	4	2	1	8	7	1	27	2	2	2	1	4	2	6	1	2	22	124	5

Chimney Fires, 7.

False Alarms, 15.



TABLE II.—Showing how Fires were Extinguished.

By Police, Strangers, or Occupiers of Premises,	-	19
„ Firemen, with Buckets,	- - -	17
„ „ „ Brigade Hand Pump,	- -	32
„ „ „ 1 Street Hydrant and 1 line of Hose,		34
„ „ „ 1 „ „ „ 2 „ „		8
„ „ „ 2 „ „ „ 2 „ „		2
„ „ „ 2 „ „ „ 3 „ „		5
„ „ „ 3 „ „ „ 4 „ „		1
„ „ „ 3 „ „ „ 5 „ „		1
„ „ „ 4 „ „ „ 5 „ „		1
„ „ „ 7 „ „ „ 14 „ „		1
„ „ „ 1 Steamer and 2 line of Hose,	-	1
„ „ „ 1 „ & 1 Hydrant, & 3 lines Hose,		1
„ „ „ 1 „ 5 „ 11 „ „		1

29,160 feet of Canvas Hose and 77 Street Hydrants have been used in connection with the above during the year.



TABLE III.—The Loss at Fires within the City during the  
Year was Estimated by Assessors and Owners of  
Property to be as under:—

39	Fires under,	-	-	£5.		
28	„ over,	-	-	£5 and under £25.		
12	„ „	-	-	£25	„	£50.
13	„ „	-	-	£50	„	£100.
12	„ „	-	-	£100	„	£200.
3	„ „	-	-	£200	„	£300.
4	„ „	-	-	£300	„	£400.
1	„ „	-	-	£400	„	£500.
3	„ „	-	-	£500	„	£600.
2	„ „	-	-	£600	„	£700.
1	„ „	-	-	£800	„	£900.
1	„ „	-	-	£900	„	£1000.
1	„ loss,	-	-	£1040.		
1	„ „	-	-	£2800.		
1	„ „	-	-	£3350.		
1	„ „	-	-	£5500.		
1	„ „	-	-	£10,750.		