

roll. There is in addition a motor-driver who, although permanently employed in that capacity, is not enrolled as a member of the brigade. This is something of an anomaly, and should be rectified.

Various hose drills, both wet and dry, were carried out in an energetic manner, and if attention is paid to the advice given at the termination of the inspection it will greatly improve the practical fire work of the brigade. The motor hose-tender appears to be in good working-order; there is a sufficient supply of hose, and it is, with the station and equipment generally, maintained in good order. I note there are only two hand axes in the possession of the brigade. Every active member should be provided with such axe, also new equipment is required as follows: Four standard pattern nozzles; one London Fire Brigade pattern hand-pump with stirrup fittings; one 24 ft. extension ladder to be carried on the motor, and to give sufficient stability and strength this ladder should be built, as to sides, rungs, clips, &c., to the specifications of the 30 ft. ladder of similar design.

In reference to the extension of the fire-alarm system, as suggested in my report dated the 7th December, 1916, the No. 1 circuit should be cut in two, also three new call-boxes should be installed in the centre of the town, placed, say, one on the corner of Kenny Street and Rosemont Road, one on the corner of Devon and Seddon Streets, and the third on the front of the fire-station, this last one to have the glass panel lighted up at night.

I enclose herewith copy of instructions for the repair of hose.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

J. J. Ritchie, Esq., Secretary, Fire Board, Waihi.

During the year nine actual fires occurred in the district, causing a fire loss of £2,757. The attendance of the brigade at thirty-two calls, No. 30 omitted, averaged 9.84 members per call.

WHANGAREI.

An inspection of the Whangarei Brigade and its equipment was made on the 5th October last. The inspection is covered by the following report forwarded to the Secretary of the Board:—

SIR,— Office of Inspector of Fire Brigades, Wellington, 18th October, 1917.

An inspection of the Whangarei Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 5th instant, and in that connection I beg to submit the following report for the consideration of your Board:—

At the inspection muster there was present the Superintendent, Deputy, and eight firemen; these, with six on leave, accounted for the full strength of the brigade.

A practice with the motor hose-tender was carried out, and, in reference to that machine, the body is not well designed for smart or convenient work, and at some later favourable opportunity it should be altered in the manner suggested. I found the station and appliances in good order and condition. The hydrant-indicators are badly in want of paint generally; they are so rusty that at night it is a difficult matter to distinguish them at all; also in some cases they are being overgrown by the green hedges, which should be cut away. A regular inspection of the street hydrants should be instituted. The doors of the reel-sheds in both Vine Town and Mair Town are at present only fastened by means of an ordinary bolt, and I understand there has been some interference with the sheds and plant. I would recommend a glass panel be fixed in one door and the doors then fastened by an internal latch-lock, the ordinary access being by means of a key.

It will be noted that on the occasion of the inspection muster six of the firemen were on leave, and of that number five were out of the district and one was laid up sick, so that for the time being, had an outbreak of fire occurred, only ten members of the brigade were available for duty. Of course, it was an exceptional case, but it is liable to happen at any time, and I understand there is nearly always some of the men out of the town. In any case I would advise that the brigade be strengthened numerically on the lines as fully explained to various members of your Board.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

C. J. Eccles, Esq., Secretary, Fire Board, Whangarei.

As compared with 1916–17, there was a decrease of one in the number of fires occurring in the district during 1917–18, but an increase of £1,273 in the fire loss. The attendance of the brigade at the five calls averaged 11.6 members per call.

WOOLSTON.

An inspection of the Woolston Brigade and its equipment was made on the 14th February last. The inspection is covered by the following report forwarded to the Secretary of the Board:—

SIR,— 20th February, 1918.

An inspection of the Woolston Fire Brigade, its station, and equipment was made on the 14th instant, and in that connection the following report is forwarded for the consideration of your Board:—

There was present at the inspection muster the Deputy Superintendent, six firemen, and one messenger; these, with the Superintendent on sick-leave and one messenger on leave, accounted for the full strength of the brigade (ten) then on the roll.