

Various drills were carried out, and it was evident that more practice is required in shipping the stand-pipes; also, the first stand-pipe sunk in Gray Street was leaking badly and requires attending to.

The bell at present in Manchester Street is now too close to the central-station bell. It should be repaired—similar cracks have been very successfully treated by means of the new welding process—and re-erected where it is likely to be of more service, say, at the corner of Manchester and Camden Streets, or somewhere in that vicinity.

Should a fire break out in the Makino district there is at present no means of summoning those firemen residing in that district. As all three live within a very short distance from where the hose-reel is housed, a comparatively small bell should suffice. As the firemen in question are absent from the district during the daytime, it would be advisable for the Superintendent to instruct some of the butter-factory employees in getting the reel to work in case of fire.

There are at present no fire-hydrants for some distance on the town side before reaching the bridge on the 10 in. main in Kimbolton Road, and, as there are a number of dwellings along that stretch, hydrants should be laid down there immediately.

I would recommend that, to the extent possible, arrangements should be made with the owners of private telephones for their use for fire-alarm purposes on the lines as suggested to the Chairman of your Board and yourself at the time of my visit.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

SIR,—

14th May, 1913.

An inspection of the Feilding Fire Brigade and its equipment was made on the 7th and 8th instant, and following is a report thereon forwarded for the consideration of your Board.

At the inspection muster there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, ten firemen, and one messenger, a total of eleven out of a strength of twenty-three then on the roll. Of the ten who were absent one was on duty, two were sick, three were on leave, and four unaccounted for. As at my previous inspection, the attendance was very unsatisfactory; six of the same men were absent on both occasions. During the progress of the subsequent drills it was again apparent that the men required more practice in shipping the stand-pipe.

Some new 1 in. and $\frac{7}{8}$ in. nozzles and two branches are required: these should be made in accordance with the standard patterns.

The street hydrant-indicators are in a very unsatisfactory condition, as at present they are of different sizes and patterns, painted different colours, and in a number of cases are not opposite the hydrants, and some missing altogether. They should be uniform in pattern and colour, and fixed in a direct line with every hydrant, otherwise they are of little real service, and the time lost in hunting for the indicator might as well be spent searching for the hydrants in the first place. Also, the hydrants should be systematically inspected, the boxes cleared of mud and stones, and the covers kept clean of road-metal, grass, &c. In one case I noticed that whilst the indicator was visible I could not find the hydrant itself, and that in broad daylight.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

Hydrants have been fixed on the 10 in. main in Kimbolton Road as recommended. The cracked fire-bell in Manchester Street has been replaced by a new one, but it ought to have been placed in a more suitable position; at present, as previously pointed out, it is situated too close to the central-station bell, and should be removed to a more advantageous site.

Thirteen fires have occurred in the district, or six more than during the previous year. Seventeen calls were received, and the average attendance of members of the brigade at fifteen (Nos. 4 and 10 omitted) was 13.5 per call, or 56 per cent. of the total membership.

The fire loss for the year amounted to £5,741, as compared with £3,706 for last year, an increase of £2,035.

The estimated cost of the brigade for the year 1913-14 is £612 10s., as against £600 for 1912-13, an increase of £12 10s.

GISBORNE.

Two inspections of the Gisborne Fire Brigade and its equipment have been made—viz., 10th and 11th October, 1912, and 23rd and 24th April, 1913; also, a special visit in connection with the arrival of the new hose, ladder, and chemical car was paid on the 8th January last.

The following reports forwarded to the secretary of the Board cover the respective visits:—

SIR,—

21st October, 1912.

In connection with my recent visit to Gisborne and my inspection of the fire brigade and its equipment on the 10th and 11th instant, I have the honour to submit the following report for the consideration of your Board.

An inspection muster was held at 7.35 p.m. on the 11th, when there were present the Superintendent, Deputy, twenty-one firemen, and one cadet: these, with two on leave, accounted for the full strength of the brigade—a satisfactory attendance.

As had been advertised, the fire-bell was rung at 7 p.m. for the purpose of testing, in its new position, to what extent it is audible to the members of the brigade whilst in their own homes. Four members reported not having heard it ring, but it was more or less distinctly audible to all the remainder, and, taking everything into consideration, the result may be considered satisfactory.