

The stations and equipment are in good order, with the exception of the ladder-carriage at the central station, the wheels of which are in such a condition that a collapse may be looked for at any moment when running it to a fire. Another hand-drawn hose-reel has been purchased. The Blaketown district is still practically without any adequate means of fire-protection.

HAMILTON.

Two inspections of the Hamilton Brigade and its equipment have been made, on the 5th October and the 17th April. A special visit was paid on the 11th October for the purpose of attending a Board meeting and consulting with the members upon various matters.

The following reports, forwarded to the Secretary of the Board, cover both inspections :—

SIR,—

15th October, 1915.

After meeting the Chairman of the Board and yourself upon my arrival in Hamilton at 8.30 p.m. on the 5th instant, for reasons then discussed I did not proceed with my intention of calling out the brigade by means of giving a false alarm of fire. A visit was paid to the fire-station, as also again on the following morning, and a verbal report then made to the Chairman to the effect that the plant at the station was not in proper working-order and was altogether in a disgraceful condition. A reference to my earlier reports will show that I have found it necessary to make similar and other adverse comments upon previous occasions. For these and a number of other reasons seriously affecting the competent work of the brigade, as discussed at the meeting with your Board held on the 11th instant, I consider the efficiency and future usefulness of the brigade decidedly calls for other arrangements in the control of the brigade.

As notes were taken at the meeting of the various recommendations made in respect to the new site, station, bell, &c., it is not necessary to repeat them here, but it will be remembered that upon making inquiries it was discovered that in place of the brigade being in possession of 2,000 ft. of good hose, as reported to me as late as the 30th June last, only some 1,000 ft. of serviceable hose is available—a quite inadequate supply—and I have to recommend that, pending the indefinite time of arrival of that ordered from England, your Board should at once obtain locally 500 ft. of new hose.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

SIR,—

1st May, 1916.

An inspection of the Hamilton Brigade and its equipment was made on the 17th ultimo, when there were present at the inspection muster the Superintendent, Deputy, eight firemen, and one messenger; these, with two on leave and one absent, accounted for the full strength then on the roll, eight short of the authorized number.

The difficulty of obtaining suitable men is now general throughout the brigades in New Zealand, and in your case an effort should be made to secure the services of some of the younger married business men who, whilst for private reasons do not enlist yet are willing to help in other ways, will for the continuance of the war assist the brigade at fires, and to that end are prepared to undergo a short course of drill to fit themselves for that purpose.

Certain hose and hydrant drills were carried out, but it was apparent the men required more drill and instruction.

The plant and appliances were in good order, and a considerable improvement is apparent throughout when compared with any of my previous visits of inspection.

I have, &c.,

THOS. T. HUGO,

Inspector of Fire Brigades.

Progress is at last being made in the providing of some adequate fire-equipment for the protection of the borough, a suitable site at very reasonable cost has been purchased, and the plans for a new central fire-brigade station approved of. No definite information has yet been received as to when delivery may be expected of the 65 h.p. combined hose, ladder, and turbine-pump motor machine that has now been on order for some eighteen months.

HASTINGS.

An inspection of the Hastings Fire Brigade and of the Fire Police Corps and their equipment was made on the 9th December last. The following report, forwarded to the Secretary of the Board, covers the inspection :—

SIR,—

17th December, 1915.

An inspection of the Hastings Fire Brigade and Fire Police Corps, with their equipments, was made on the 9th instant, and following is a report in that connection for the consideration of your Board.

At the inspection muster there were present of the brigade—Superintendent, Deputy, and fourteen firemen; these, with four on theatre duty and two on leave, accounted for the full present strength of the brigade. Of the fire police there were present—Captain, two Lieutenants, and one constable, with five reported on leave, or a muster of four out of a total strength of fifteen on the roll. Various drills were performed by the brigade, including working the manual, all carried out in a satisfactory manner.