ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

FIRE DEPARTMENT
AND WIRE DIVISION

OF THE

CITY OF BOSTON

FOR THE

YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1931

CITY OF BOSTON
PRINTING DEPARTMENT
1932

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OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT.

EDWARD F. MCLAUGHLIN,
Fire Commissioner.

HERBERT J. HICKEY,
Executive Secretary of the Department.

HENRY A. FOX,
Chief of Department.

GEORGE L. FICKETT,
Superintendent of Fire Alarm Division.

WALTER J. BURKE,
Superintendent of Wire Division.

EDWARD E. WILLIAMSON,
Superintendent of Maintenance Division.

ALBERT J. CAULFIELD,
Deputy Chief in Charge of Fire Prevention Division.

WILLIAM J. MCNALLY, M. D.,
Medical Examiner.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

FIRE DEPARTMENT

FOR THE YEAR 1931.

Boston, March 1, 1932.

Hon. James M. Curley,
Mayor of the City of Boston.

Dear Sir,— I have the honor to submit herewith a report of the activities of the Boston Fire Department for the year ending December 31, 1931, as required by section 24, chapter 4, of the Revised Ordinances of 1925.

Fire Loss.

The total fire loss for 1931 in the City of Boston, estimated by the insurance companies, amounted to $4,113,419.53. This is $480,203 less than the loss in 1930. There were thirty-seven fires where the loss was over fifteen thousand dollars as compared with sixty-five in the previous year. There were only two fires showing a loss of over one hundred thousand dollars, namely,

January 31, Eldredge Baker Company *et al.*, 35-37 Sleeper street	$188,794 01
March 16, Wolpert Shoe Company *et al.*, 76-78 South street	108,203 13

During the year the department responded to less calls than in 1930. Eight thousand six hundred and ninety-four alarms were transmitted to the department and were actually responded to. In 1930 the department responded to 8,701 alarms. Of the 8,694 responded to last year 4,865 were box alarms and 3,829 were still and automatic alarms. There were 911 false alarms during the year, an increase of 213 over the previous year.

The reduction in the fire loss of almost half a million dollars is noteworthy at this time. According to traditions in the fire service the fire loss usually mounts during the periods of depression, but the contrary has been our experience this year. The present efficient condition of the fire fighting force, the vigilance of the fire prevention division, and the prosecution of arson cases have undoubtedly been instrumental in keeping the loss at a lower figure.

Fire Prevention.

The personnel of the fire prevention division has been diligent in its duties during the past year and the work of the inspection division has been under increased supervision by the assignment of more superior officers to this division.

During the year all classes of buildings, with the exception of one and two family dwellings, were inspected.

Number of inspections (initial)	371,405
Number of reinspections	13,361
Number of complaints reported	12,522
Conditions corrected by personal contact	22,767
Number of personal inspections by officers of Fire Prevention Division	2,477
Oil burners inspected	1,339
Oil burners reinspected	463
Oil burner defects corrected	451

Reports on hazardous conditions were sent to other departments as follows:

To State Fire Marshal	120
To Building Department	3,163

To Health Department	10
To Department of School Buildings	6
Notices sent to correct hazardous conditions	897
Personal services by Constable	486
Prosecutions for violation of Fire Prevention Laws	23

During the Christmas holiday season a detail of inspectors was maintained in and about the shopping and high value districts and in other locations where shopping congestion prevailed. Four officers and thirty-four privates were engaged in this service.

Intensive inspection campaigns were conducted in certain sections of the city and in addition daily inspection was maintained in several building groups when certain hazards and conditions existed.

In addition to inspections made by Fire Prevention inspectors the following number of inspections were made by District and Company Officers:

Building inspections	69,686
Theatre inspections	3,874
Schoolhouse inspections	3,871
Public buildings inspected	914
Car house inspections	101
Inspections at Long and Deer Islands	24
Total number of inspections made by Fire Prevention inspectors, district and company officers	467,966

Arson.

The Massachusetts Legislature by chapter 383 of the Acts of 1931 amended the Fire Prevention Act so that the Fire Commissioner was authorized to investigate the causes of fires in Boston with particular reference to suspicious and supposed incendiary fires. Previous to this amendment the Fire Commissioner of Boston was not allowed to conduct any investigation of a fire after it was found that the fire was of suspicious origin. This year I went to the Legislature and petitioned for authority to conduct investigations of suspicious fires in Boston because I felt that a large number of fires could be traced to arson and that prompt investigation and prosecution might bring about desirable results.

The Fire Department began to exercise its authority under the amendment on June 4, and an arson squad of six firemen and four police officers was organized. This squad is on duty twenty-four hours a day, stationed

at Headquarters, and is under the direct supervision of Deputy Chief Albert J. Caulfield of the Fire Prevention Division. During the year 108 fires were reported with suspicious causes and 99 with unknown causes. The record of the Arson Squad during the first seven months of operation is as follows:

Number of persons interviewed at Division Office relative to suspicious fires	20
Number of inquests held and one case reopened for new evidence	17
Number of cases submitted to the District Attorney's Office for action	12
Number of inquests held where insufficient evidence was obtained for prosecution	5
Number of cases presented to the Grand Jury by the District Attorney	8
Number of indictments returned (in four cases more than one person was indicted)	12
Number of "No Bills" returned	1
Number of persons under indictment awaiting trial	12
Number of civilian witnesses summoned to inquests	114
Number of department witnesses	102

The Arson Squad received valuable assistance from the Law Department and the chemist of the Public Works Department.

BUILDINGS.

A new fire station is being erected at the corner of K and Fourth streets, South Boston, to provide quarters for Engine Company 2 and Ladder Company 19. Engine Company 2 is now located at O and Fourth streets, and the quarters of Ladder Company 19 are at 715 East Fourth street. The present quarters of both these companies are cramped and unsuited for the needs of the department and the district served by them, particularly at Ladder Company 19 where the building cannot house the proper apparatus for South Boston, and the street is so narrow and the present building so constructed that apparatus cannot leave without delay. The new building at the new location, which will be ready early in 1932, will provide proper housing facilities for the men and apparatus in a location which will give both companies a more efficient operating radius.

Fire Apparatus.

During the year twenty-eight motor vehicles were purchased, tested and placed in service as follows:

8 American-LaFrance combination hose cars (Booster pumps and tanks).
1 American-LaFrance rescue squad car with special body.
1 American-LaFrance city service ladder truck.
1 American-LaFrance V 12 combination pump and hose car, 1,000 gallons.
1 American-LaFrance V 12 combination pump, hose and booster car, 750 gallons.
1 American-LaFrance 85 foot aerial truck.
1 American-LaFrance tractor.
1 Re-fueling unit complete.
9 Hupmobile sedans.
2 Model A Ford coupes.
2 Model A Ford roadsters with pick-up bodies.

Seven reserve hose cars and one school car were sold at public auction. Eleven small cars were traded in when new cars were purchased.

The motor equipment of the department, at the present time, consists of the following:

Type.	In Service.	In Reserve.
Pumping engines	50	10
Steam engines (tractors)	.....	3
Hose cars	48	8
Aerial ladder trucks	22	6
City service trucks	9	5
Water towers	3	1
Chief officers' cars	35	8
School car	.....	1
Rescue cars	3	2
Fuel cars	1	1
Portable lighting plants	2	
Wrecking car	1	
Motorcycle (fire patrol)	.....	1
Commercial trucks	12	4
Emergency cars (Ford)	5	
Ford coupes	3	

High Pressure Service.

The records of the two high pressure stations for the year are as follows:

	Station No. 1.	Station No. 2.
Total alarms to which pumps responded.....	206	243
Water discharge recorded on Venturi meters *.....	118,000 gallons	415,500 gallons

* Owing to the construction of the Venturi meters they do not record flows under 600 gallons per minute.

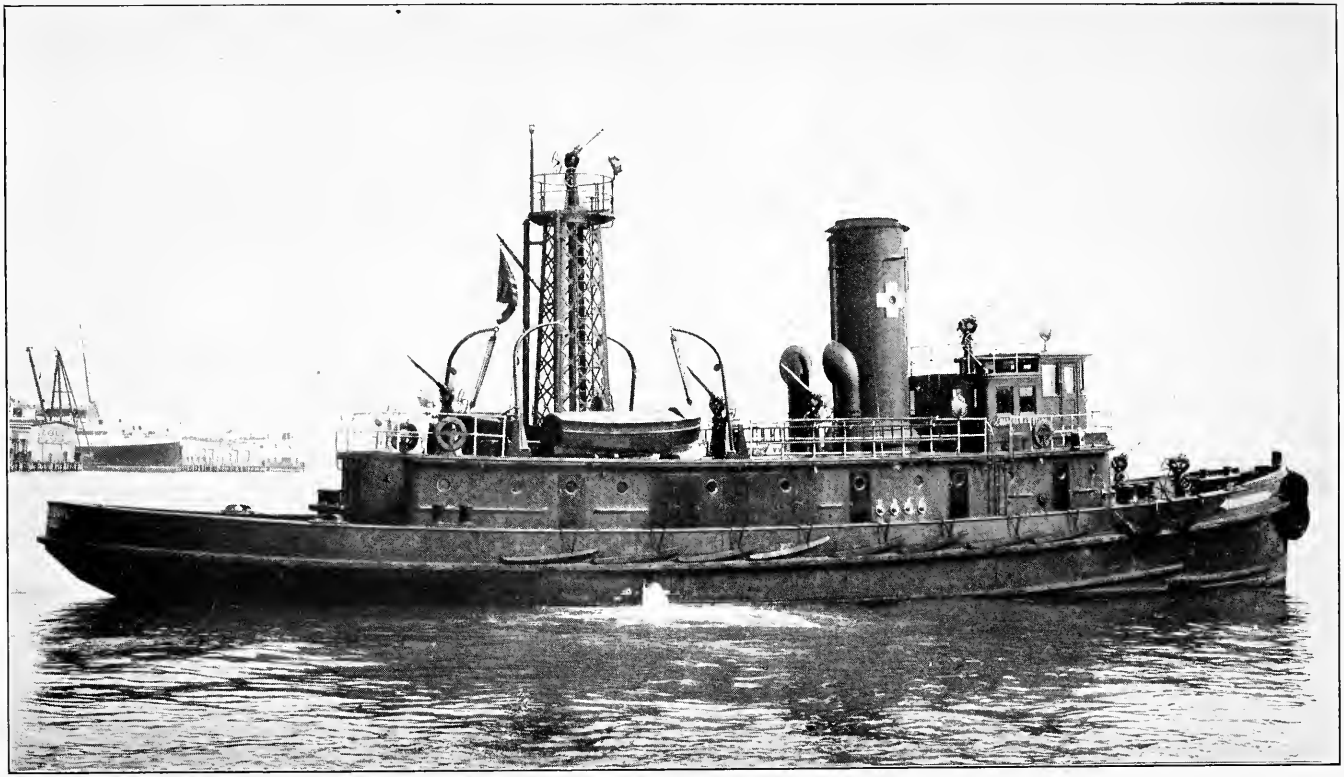
During the year fifty high pressure hydrants were placed in service, bringing the total up to 501, and the mileage of high pressure mains was increased from 16.8 miles to 18.45 miles.

The equipment of High Pressure Station No. 1 was transferred from the original location at Battery and Commercial streets (Lincoln Power Station of Boston Elevated Railway) to a new location at 165 Kneeland street (Edison Station of the Edison Electric Illuminating Company). The work of moving the equipment to the new station commenced September 10, 1931, and was completed October 12, 1931. The new station was accepted and control commenced by the Fire Department on December 14, 1931.

Engine 44, "Angus J. McDonald," was taken out of service on December 16, 1931, and placed in storage, having been replaced by a new fireboat, Engine 44, "Matthew J. Boyle," on December 8, 1931.

A special appropriation of $350,000 for this boat was provided by Your Honor in 1930. The contract for the construction of the boat, at a cost of $327,825, was awarded to George Lawley & Sons Corporation of Boston, and the keel was laid January 29, 1931. The boat was launched May 23, 1931. Trial tests were held on November 15, 1931, and the boat was placed in service December 8, 1931. The total cost of the boat, including architect's fees, was $349,504.20.

This rugged steel constructed boat, with a pumping capacity of 12,000 gallons per minute at 150 pounds pressure, is designed to operate at full capacity for forty-eight hours without replenishing. Length, overall, 125 feet; beam, over guards, is 29 feet 6 inches; gross tonnage, 338.91 tons. The loaded draft is limited to



FIREBOAT ENGINE 44, MATTHEW J. BOYLE, LEAVING ON TRIAL TRIP, NOVEMBER 15, 1931.

10 feet 6 inches, and the boat has a speed of 12 knots per hour. The general dimensions of the boat have been determined to meet most effectively the particular conditions prevalent at the Port of Boston.

The steam for propulsion and for fire fighting is generated by two Babcock and Willcox water tube boilers, built for a working pressure of 250 pounds per square inch and fired by eight Todd oil burners. The boat will be propelled by a vertical, direct-acting, compound, condensing engine of approximately 1,100 horse power. There are four turbine-driven, two-stage centrifugal Dean Hill fire pumps.

The water from the pumps is handled through seven 3,000-gallon monitors or guns, one of which is mounted on a steel tower 30 feet above the water. There are also twenty $3\frac{1}{2}$-inch hydrant connections on the deck house, from which hose lines can be run either to rail guns or to points on shore.

HYDRANTS.

The following is a list of the hydrants in service for fire purpose, as of December 31, 1931, showing the number and different types of same:

	Public.	Private.
Ordinary post	3,718	131
Boston post	2,618	22
Lowry	810	33
Boston Lowry	367	5
Batchelder and Finneran post	3,295	5
Boston	120	111
High pressure	501	
Chapman post	77	55
Ludlow post	4	13
Matthew post		4
Coffin post	1	
Totals	11,511	379

FIRE COLLEGE.

After several months of study and preparation by a special committee a Fire College was organized in the department, and opened on November 30, 1931, with a

comprehensive course of lectures and demonstrations in fire fighting and fire protection. This college was established with a view to improving the morale and efficiency of the department, and in order that the officers and men be taught a systematic and uniform method of operation at fires, and be provided with a technical knowledge necessary to their work, a course of twenty-seven lectures and demonstrations was prepared, some of which required the time of two or three days. The lecturers at the college comprised officers of the department and experts in various insurance lines, public service corporations, building construction and water service.

Forty officers from the Boston Fire Department and thirteen officers from outside departments attended the first session of the college. These officers are obliged to attend the college on their own time as well as while on duty. So many requests were received from departments outside the city that it became necessary to limit the number of applicants. As soon as the first session is completed another session will be started, and this will be repeated until all officers and members have had an opportunity to attend the college.

Mutual Aid.

The department responded to sixty-one (61) alarms of fire outside of the city limits as follows:

Milton	39
Somerville	14
Newton	3
Brookline	2
Revere	1
Saugus	1
Salem	1

FIRE ALARM SERVICE.

The fire alarm service of the department has been maintained at its usual high standard.

In order to improve "Mutual Aid" service between Boston and the adjoining cities and towns, special circuits were made between fire alarm headquarters in Boston and the central fire station in Chelsea and the fire alarm offices in Somerville, Cambridge and Brookline. Tapper service was also extended in underground cables from the Boston line to Newton Fire Headquarters.

Alarms are transmitted both ways on these circuits and devices are connected into these circuits making it possible for instant telephone communication thereby eliminating the possibilities of uncertainties and misunderstandings.

Approximately 7,000 feet of ducts were laid underground and over 53,000 feet of cable were hauled into underground ducts, 24,000 feet for extension of service, 17,000 feet to replace smaller sizes with larger cables and 12,000 feet to replace cable which was defective. Thirty-one box posts were installed, eight were relocated and ten broken posts were replaced. Of the forty fire alarm boxes installed, thirty-five were placed on streets by the department, two were installed by the Department of School Buildings, and three are on private property. Six boxes were relocated and five were removed from service. All boxes and posts were painted.

OPERATING RECORDS.

First alarms	4,865
Second alarms	75
Third alarms	18
Fourth alarms	1
Total	4,959

BOX ALARMS RECEIVED BUT NOT TRANSMITTED.

Same box received two or more times for same fire	408
Adjacent boxes received for same fire	287
Received from boxes but treated as stills	10
Total	705

STILL ALARMS RECEIVED AND TRANSMITTED.

Received from citizens by telephone	2,737
Received from Police Department by telephone	210
Received from Fire Department stations	1,186
Received from boxes but treated as stills	10
Mutual aid alarms (adjacent cities and towns) treated as stills	61
Emergency service treated as stills	146
Total	4,350

Still alarms received by telephone for which box alarms were afterwards received and transmitted	346

Still alarms received by telephone for which box alarms, not received, were transmitted (11 p. m. to 7 a. m.)	328

AUTOMATIC AND A. D. T. ALARMS.

Boston Automatic Fire Alarm Company:	
Transmitted by company to this department	136
Box alarms received and transmitted after automatic alarms had been struck	3
Box alarms, not received, but transmitted, after automatic alarm had been struck (11 p. m. to 7 a. m.)	19
Automatic alarms received at fire alarm office but not transmitted	11
American District Telegraph Company:	
Transmitted by company to this department	114
Box alarms received and transmitted after A. D. T. alarms had been struck	5
Box alarms not received but transmitted after A. D. T. alarms had been struck (11 p. m. to 7 a. m.)	44
A. D. T. alarms received at fire alarm office but not transmitted	15

SUMMARY OF ALARMS.

Alarms received:	
Box alarms, including multiples	5,664
Still alarms, all classes	4,350
Boston automatic alarms	136
A. D. T. alarms	114
Total received from all sources	10,264
Exclude following	
Multiples	94
Box alarms received but not transmitted	705
Still alarms for which other alarms were transmitted	674
Automatic alarms for which other alarms were transmitted	33
A. D. T. alarms for which other alarms were transmitted	64
	1,570
Total alarms, with eliminations, to which apparatus responded	8,694

MULTIPLE ALARM FIRES.

With two alarms	56
With three alarms	17
With four alarms	1

Fire Alarm Box Records.

Boxes from which no alarms were received	464
Box tests and inspections	10,611

Note.— All street box doors are tested weekly.

Fire Alarm Boxes in Service.

Total number	1,609
Owned by Fire Department	1,150
Owned by School Buildings Department	257
Owned by Boston Automatic Fire Alarm Company	52
Privately owned	150

Fire Alarm Boxes in Districts.

District 1	92	District 9	108
District 2	74	District 10	129
District 3	45	District 11	145
District 4	86	District 12	104
District 5	75	District 13	157
District 6	102	District 14	137
District 7	106	District 15	120
District 8	128		

Division 1	372
Division 2	481
Division 3	755

And one box in Chelsea.

Summary of Work Done in 1931.

	Approximate Number of Feet.
Line wire used in new work	33,890
Line wire used for replacements	30,160
Line wire removed from service	27,025
Aerial cable installed	2,280
Conductors in same	4,560
Aerial cable removed from service	1,300
Conductors in same	4,400
Underground cable installed (extensions)	23,944
Conductors in same	146,125
Underground cable replaced	29,169
Conductors in same	800,020
Conduits laid underground	6,847
Ducts in same	7,001
Ducts abandoned	1,175
Manholes built	5
Handholes built	6
Fire alarm boxes installed by this department	35
Fire alarm boxes installed by School Buildings Department	2
Fire alarm boxes installed on private property	3
Fire alarm boxes relocated	6

Fire alarm boxes removed from service	5
Box posts installed	31
Box posts relocated	8
Box posts reset or replaced by new	10
Cable posts installed	3
Cable posts relocated	2
Cable posts replaced by new	2
Underground cable boxes attached to poles	13
Underground cable boxes removed from service	14

WIRE DIVISION.

Regular inspections were made of the permanent installations of all theatres, places of amusement, and public halls, together with new installations and changes throughout the city. In addition, three inspectors were assigned to the inspection of old work with good results as in a great many cases, necessary changes were required, in the interests of safety and the requirements of the department were complied with.

Thorough investigations were made of all fires and accidents due to electrical causes and reports of the same are on file.

During the year there were one hundred and thirty-one fires reported as due to electrical causes, eighteen of which were found not due to electricity, and five either undetermined or in radio. There were seven manhole explosions; five pole fires and sixteen accidents, one of which was fatal.

The following is a table showing a summary of work done by the interior division:

Notices of new work received	17,951
Number of permits issued to turn on current	13,642
Number of incandescent lamps inspected	2,265,930
Number of motor inspected	17,659
Number of buildings in which wiring was completely inspected	3,311
Number of inspections made	31,233
Number of inspections made of theatres, places of amusement and public halls	1,658
Income from permits to perform electrical work,	$57,980.82

Exterior Division.

The underground district for the year 1931 as prescribed under authority of chapter 240 of the Acts of 1926, comprised the following streets:

Dorchester.— Joseph street, from Welles avenue to Brent street; Sydney street, from Crescent avenue to Savin Hill

avenue; Winter street, from Bowdoin street to Adams street; Church street, from Adams street to High street; Pierce avenue, from Adams street to Plain street; Neponset avenue, from King square to the Neponset Bridge.

Roxbury.— Worthington street, from Longwood avenue to the Fenway; St. Alphonsus street, from Ward street to Calumet street; Fenwood road, from Huntington avenue to Brookline avenue.

West Roxbury.— Woodlawn street, from Hyde Park avenue to Forest Hills Cemetery.

South Boston.— Summer street, from East First street to East Second street; L street, from East Second street to Broadway; West Third street, from West Second street, a distance of 2,025 feet to a point 100 feet east of the east line of D street, making a total distance of four miles as provided by law.

In these prescribed streets from which poles and overhead wires were to be removed, there were standing on January 1, 1931, a total of two hundred and five (205) poles (not including the trolley poles of the Boston Elevated Railway which are exempt) owned by the Edison Electric Illuminating Company, New England Telephone and Telegraph Company, supporting a total of six hundred and thirty-eight thousand nine hundred (638,900) feet of overhead wires owned by the Edison Electric Illuminating Company, New England Telephone and Telegraph Company, Boston Elevated Railway, Eastern Massachusetts Street Railway, Boston Fire Department (Fire Alarm Branch) and Boston Police Department (Police Signal Service).

During the past year the inspectors of this division have reported ninety-eight (98) poles decayed at base and sixteen (16) poles leaning, or a total of one hundred and fourteen (114) poles, which were replaced by new poles or reset by the various companies at the request of this department.

The following table shows the overhead work for the year from January 1, 1931, to December 31, 1931, inclusive:

Number of poles in new locations	151
Number of poles replaced, reset or straightened,	607
Number of poles removed	246
Number of poles now standing in the public streets	17,924
Number of defects reported	1,028
Number of defects corrected	801
(Other defects in process of correction.)	
Number of notices of overhead construction	6,542

Number of overhead inspections 20,801
Number of overhead reports 7,179
Amount of overhead wires removed by owners (in feet) 2,211,979

UNDERGROUND CONSTRUCTION.

The ducts used for the underground conduits of the drawing-in system are of the following type:

1. Vitrified clay (laid in concrete).
2. Fiber (laid in concrete).
3. Iron.
4. Wood.

In side or residential streets special underground construction for electric light and power purposes (110 and 220 volts), of the type known as "Split Fiber Solid Main System," has also been installed.

The electrical approvals for underground electrical construction numbered 2,868
Number of inspections of underground electrical construction 8,660
Number of reports of underground electrical construction 2,656

Table Showing Underground Work for the Year 1931.

COMPANY.	Feet of Conduit.	Feet of Duct.	Feet of Cable.	Number of Manholes.	Number of Services.
Boston Elevated Railway.....	4,356	17,086	43,112	11	
Boston Consolidated Gas Company.	657	4,815	37,582	1	37
Edison Electric Illuminating Company.	59,860	649,468	1,397,095	317	2,102
Boston Fire Department (Fire Alarm Branch).	4,436	4,436	40,980	5	33
Boston Police Department (Police Signal Service).	556	556	39,296	.....	10
School Buildings Department.....	500	496	.....	1	3
Boston Low Tension Wire Association.	44	44			
New England Telephone and Telegraph Company.	10,520	37,454	155,849	11	24
Western Union Telegraph Company.	199	398	2,157		
Totals.....	81,128	714,753	1,716,071	346	2,209

NOTE.— "Split Fiber Solid Main System," of the Edison Electric Illuminating Company is included in the above figures, comprising 3,897 feet of conduit and 7,681 feet of duct.

Table Showing the Amount and Distribution of Boston's Electrical Power, December 31, 1931.

COMPANY.	Total Rated Horse Power of Boilers.	Total Rated Horse Power of Engines.	Capacity of Incandescent Lamps in Kilowatts.	Capacity of Arc Lamps in Kilowatts.	Kilowatts of Motors.	Kilowatts of Mixed Load.	Number of Stations.
Boston Elevated Railway	35,320	222,570	4,305	15	353,353	84,800	21
Edison Electric Illuminating Company,	54,424	292,816	*	*	*	*	66
Boston Consolidated Gas Company,	.....	.....	3,000	.....	6,000	2,000	2
Quaker Building Company	620	400	125	.....	106	.....	1
Hanover Street Trust	500	360	140	.....	75	215	1
Totals	90,864	516,146	7,570	15	359,534	87,015	91

*Unknown. (Meter capacity connected to lines of Edison system 1,129,520 kilowatts.)

RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. During the past two years I have made an exhaustive study of the fires and their causes in this city, particularly since the passage of legislation authorizing the Fire Commissioner to investigate and institute criminal proceedings in case of supposed incendiary fires. This study made at various angles always led to one conclusion, namely, that the crime of arson is more prevalent in this community than many familiar with the situation in this city are willing to admit. A thorough, consistent and careful investigation of all fires presents the most convincing evidence that the majority of fires are not accidental. The Fire Prevention Division and Arson Squad are exercising the greatest vigilance possible for the purpose of exposing arson and punishing those responsible for it. I strongly recommend a continuance of this policy and that everything be done to encourage and enlarge this particular activity.

2. The fire stations of the department are being maintained in the best possible condition, yet there are a few which should be rebuilt and relocated when the financial condition of the city will permit.

The first location which should be considered is the station at Longwood and Brookline avenues. This building is old, unsuited for a modern fire station, and is in a location where it cannot give the greatest measure of service to the city. The erection of a new fire station at a location nearer the schools, hospitals, and

residences in the Roxbury district should replace the present building at Longwood and Brookline avenues.

Other locations which should receive consideration when the opportunity presents itself are the following:

Engine 3 and Ladder 3, now located at the corner of Bristol street and Harrison avenue, should be rebuilt and relocated somewhere in the vicinity of Harrison avenue and Wareham street. Engine 23 on Northampton street could be included in this project.

Engine 8 and Ladder 1.— The former is located on Salem street, a very narrow, congested street. Ladder 1 is an old station on Friend street. The property occupied by Ladder 1 will probably be needed in connection with the new East Boston Traffic Tunnel development. A new house for both companies somewhere on Hanover street would serve the district more effectively.

Engine 16 and Ladder 6, now on River street, Dorchester Lower Mills, should be relocated somewhere in the vicinity of Gallivan Boulevard and Codman street.

Engine 20 and Ladder 27, now at Walnut street near Neponset Bridge, should be relocated in the vicinity of Neponset avenue and Victory road.

Engine 25 and Ladder Company 8, at Fort Hill square, should receive consideration when funds are available for rebuilding.

A few of the older stations are in good locations but should be remodeled to provide proper accommodations for the men and apparatus. Among these are Engine 13, Engine 22, Engine 24, and Ladder 9.

A very important matter which will require consideration within a short time is the enlargement of the repair shop of the Maintenance Division so that the department will have sufficient space for the storage of reserve apparatus and to give more efficient service in the replacement of disabled apparatus.

In the Fire Alarm Division the practice of replacing a specified number of old fire alarm boxes with boxes of the latest type should be continued. The policy of furnishing an up-to-date, fool-proof signal system is most essential in order that the Fire Department may receive prompt notice of fires.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward F. McLaughlin,
Fire Commissioner.

RECAPITULATION OF EXPENDITURES 1931.

Fire Department	$4,620,818 60	
Wire Division	102,351 50	
New Fireboat	269,929 35	
New Fire Station, South Boston District	138,313 83	
		$5,131,413 28

INCOME.

Permits for fires in open spaces, fireworks, blasting, transportation and storage of explosives, garage and gasolene storage, etc.	$20,404 25
Sale of old material (condemned hose)	270 52
Sale of old material (junk)	1,175 83
Sale of badges	524 00
Property damage (door-cable)	126 66
Property damage (fire alarm boxes and posts)	883 32
Property damage (fire apparatus)	362 20
For labor performed by this department in January, 1931	182 96
For refund on cable reels in February	9 80
For sale of miscellaneous items, beds, stove, lantern, frames, old grinding valve machine, auto winter inclosure, etc.	13 00
	$23,952 54
Wire Division:	
Income from permits to perform electrical work	57,980 82
	$81,933 36

CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT.

Henry A. Fox.

The chief is in charge of the fire protection of the city, which is divided into three divisions, each commanded by a deputy chief, which are subdivided into fifteen districts, each commanded by a district chief.

Assistant Chief of Department, Henry J. Power.

Division 1.

Deputy Chief, John J. Kelley.

Headquarters, Ladder House 8, Fort Hill Square.

This division comprises Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

District 1.

District Chiefs, Thomas E. Conroy and Napeen Boutilier.

Headquarters, Ladder House 2, Paris Street, East Boston.

Apparatus Located in the District.— Engines 5, 9, 11, 40, 47 (fireboat), Ladders 2, 21, 31.

District 2.

District Chiefs, Philip A. Tague and Thomas F. Ward.

Headquarters, Engine House 50, Winthrop Street, Charlestown.

Apparatus Located in the District.— Engines 27, 32, 36, 50, Ladders 9, 22, Rescue 3.

District 3.

District Chiefs, John J. Kenney and John F. Good.

Headquarters, Ladder House 18, Pittsburgh Street.

Apparatus Located in the District.— Engines 25, 38, 39, 44 (fireboat), Ladders 8, 18, Water Towers 1 and 3.

District 4.

District Chiefs, Avery B. Howard and John F. McDonough.

Headquarters, Engine House 4, Bulfinch Street.

Apparatus Located in the District.— Engines 4, 6, 8, 31 (fireboat), Ladders 1, 24.

District 5.

District Chiefs, John F. Watson and Dennis J. Coughlin.

Headquarters, Engine House 26–35, Broadway.

Apparatus Located in the District.— Engines 7, 10, 26, 35, Ladder 17, Rescue 1, Water Tower 2.

Division 2.

Deputy Chiefs, Thomas H. Downey and William F. Quigley.

Headquarters, Engine House 22, Warren Avenue.

This division comprises Districts 6, 7, 8, 11.

District 6.

District Chiefs, Michael J. Teehan and Edward G. Chamberlain.

Headquarters, Engine House 1, Dorchester Street, South Boston.

Apparatus Located in the District.— Engines 1, 2, 15, 43, Ladders 5, 19, 20.

District 7.

District Chiefs, Michael F. Minehan and Samuel J. Pope.

Headquarters, Engine House 22, Warren Avenue.

Apparatus Located in the District.— Engines 3, 22, 33, Ladders 3, 13, 15.

District 8.

District Chiefs, Louis C. Stickel and Daniel Martell.

Headquarters, Ladder House 12, Tremont Street.

Apparatus Located in the District.— Engines 13, 14, 37, Ladders 12, 26.

District 11.

District Chiefs, Thomas H. Andreoli and Cornelius J. O'Brien.

Headquarters, Engine House 41, Harvard Avenue, Brighton.

Apparatus Located in the District.— Engines 29, 34, 41, 51, Ladders 11, 14.

Division 3.

Deputy Chiefs, Walter M. McLean and Frank A. Sweeney.

Headquarters, Ladder House 23, Washington Street, Grove Hall.

This division comprises Districts 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15.

District 9.

District Chiefs, William H. McCorkle and Edward J. Locke.

Headquarters, Engine House 12, Dudley Street.

Apparatus Located in the District.— Engines 12, 23, 24, Ladders 4, 23, Rescue 2.

District 10.

District Chiefs, Francis J. Jordan and Charles H. Long.

Headquarters, Engine House 17, Parish Street, Meeting House Hill.

Apparatus Located in the District.— Engines 17, 18, 21, Ladder 7.

District 12.

District Chiefs, Timothy F. Donovan and Joseph W. Shea.

Headquarters, Engine House, 28 Centre Street, Jamaica Plain.

Apparatus Located in the District.— Engines 28, 42, 53, Ladders 10, 30.

District 13.

District Chiefs, Charles A. Donohoe and Patrick J. V. Kelley.

Headquarters, Engine House 45, Corner Washington and Poplar Streets, Roslindale.

Apparatus Located in the District.— Engines 30, 45, Ladders 16, 25.

District 14.

District Chiefs, James Mahoney and James F. Ryan.

Headquarters, Engine House 46, Peabody Square, Dorchester.

Apparatus Located in the District.— Engines 16, 20, 46, 52, Ladders 6, 27, 29.

District 15.

District Chiefs, John P. Murray and Michael D. Sullivan.

Headquarters, Engine House 48, Corner Harvard Avenue and Winthrop Street, Hyde Park.

Apparatus Located in the District.— Engines 19, 48, 49, Ladder 28.

Alarms.

Building fires	3,708
Automobile fires	893
Rubbish, vacant lot	357
Rubbish near building	106
Dump	129
Brush or grass	899
Other outdoor fires	488
False	911
Accidental	224
Needless	735
Rescue	143
Marine	18
Out of city calls	50
Total alarms	8,661

Fires in Buildings.

Construction of Buildings.

Fire resistive	379
Second class	1,804
Frame	1,522
Other types	3
	3,708

Point of Origin.

Basement	1,025
First floor	1,042
Second floor	574
Third floor	386
Above third floor	193
Roof	158
Outside	330
	3,708

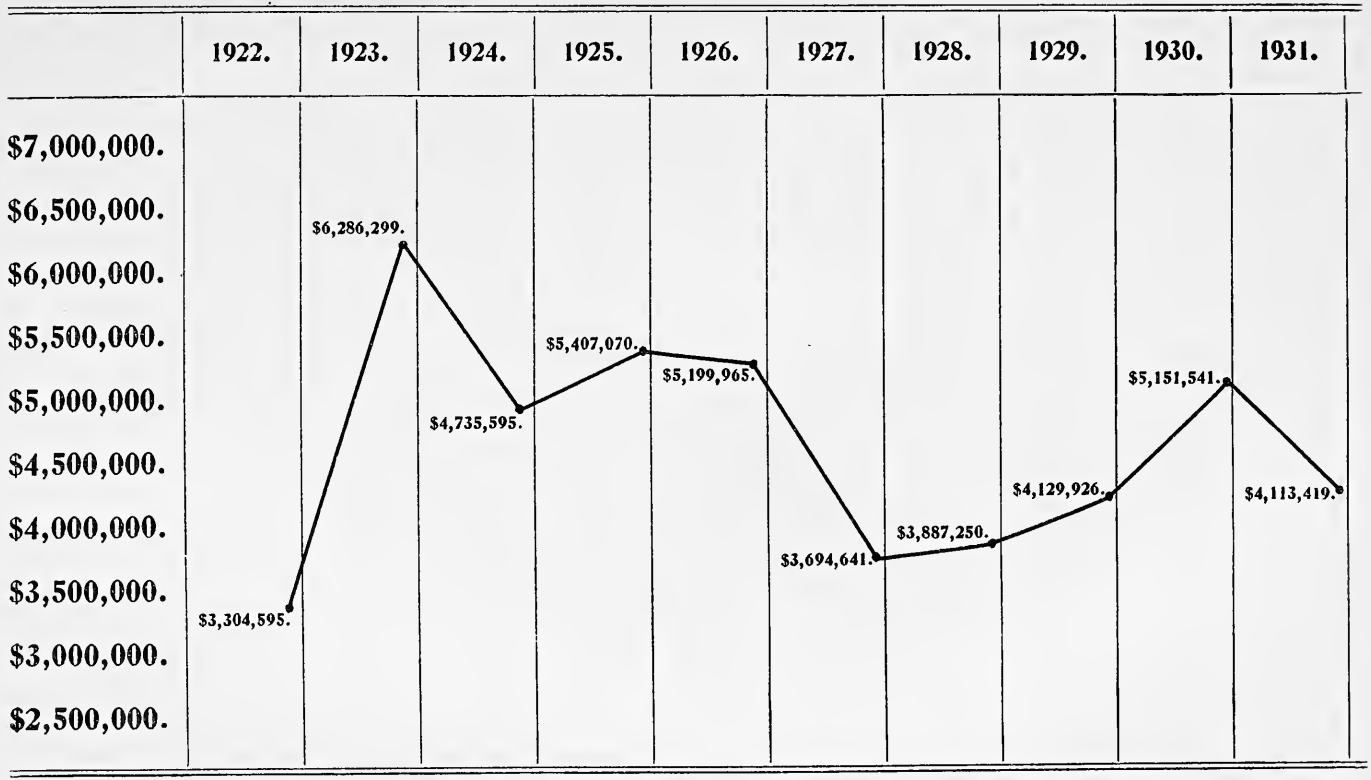
Extent of Fire.

Confined to point of origin	2,599
Confined to building	1,027
Spread to other buildings	82
	3,708

Causes of Fires in Building.

Chimneys, soot burning	420
Defective chimney	59
Sparks from chimney	126
Defectively installed heater	105
Rubbish near heater	7
Hot ashes	71
Fuel oil burners	79
Starting fires — kerosene or gasolene	10
Careless smoking	931
Children and matches	147
Other careless use of matches	288
Defective wiring	120
Electric appliances and motors	145
Home dry cleaning	6
Flammable liquids near flame	39
Kerosene lamps, stoves	94
Grease, food on stove	114
Clothes, furniture too near fire	87
Spontaneous ignition	123
Fireworks	27
Thawing water pipes	13
Sparks from machines	6
City gas and appliances	14
Miscellaneous known causes	301
Incendiary or suspicious	158
Unknown	218
Total	3,708

GRAPHIC CHART OF FIRE LOSS FOR PAST TEN YEARS.



Alarms, Fire Losses and Insurance.

Months.	Alarms.				Alarms Received From						No Fire.					Automobiles.	Rubbish — Grass.				
	Box.	Telephone.	Other Stills.	Members.	Police.	Watchman.	Outsider.	Automatic.	Unknown.	Total.	False.	Accidental.	Rescue.	Needless Bell.	Needless Still.		Rubbish Vacant Lot.	Rubbish near Building.	Dump.	Brush or Grass.	Other Outdoor.
January	354	284	36	6	9	8	563	30	58	674	57	16	9	29	59	77	29	2	7	29	12
February	282	240	32	7	14	21	439	32	41	554	40	27	7	22	42	47	1	2	5	5	11
March	352	299	38	20	13	13	527	28	88	689	64	27	11	11	43	57	17	4	10	88	21
April	541	472	62	18	15	7	912	19	104	1,075	72	14	18	20	32	92	72	14	29	299	36
May	344	262	54	4	13	11	518	24	90	660	68	19	12	13	40	66	40	9	10	56	39
June	349	231	49	5	11	6	482	26	99	629	68	26	15	14	36	81	39	14	9	13	58
July	419	234	57	16	13	6	546	22	107	710	71	22	11	26	32	82	37	15	11	14	99
August	326	184	36	10	6	3	408	19	100	546	77	16	10	26	32	74	15	7	13	16	37
September	297	203	40	4	10	3	420	20	83	540	63	16	15	16	36	59	26	9	6	14	43
October	408	276	46	5	21	4	553	20	127	730	110	19	13	20	42	66	21	18	14	40	58
November	496	348	38	10	12	7	676	14	163	882	123	12	10	27	47	81	31	10	11	155	40
December	559	382	31	11	13	12	792	14	130	972	98	10	12	27	43	111	29	2	4	170	34
Totals	4,727	3,415	519	116	150	101	6,836	268	1,190	8,661	911	224	143	251	484	893	357	106	129	899	488

Alarms, Fire Losses and Insurance.—*Concluded.*

Months.	Alarms.									Fire Losses and Insurance.			
										Loss.		Insurance.	
	Marine.	Out of City Calls.	Confined to Room.	Confined to Building.	Extended to Others.	Damage None.	Damage Slight.	Damage Considerable.	Totally Destroyed.	Buildings.	Contents.	Buildings.	Contents.
January	.....	7	236	103	2	153	182	6	....	$316,013 25	$257,843 16	$13,914,438 00	$1,417,645 90
February	3	5	201	129	7	147	184	6	....	265,727 58	169,160 29	9,760,854 89	4,859,037 80
March	1	.....	203	123	9	129	198	7	1	323,387 51	227,014 13	9,673,726 00	2,007,151 34
April	1	11	249	111	5	116	242	5	2	176,389 75	102,828 76	6,780,951 00	1,418,485 00
May	.....	1	218	61	8	98	183	5	1	166,992 74	193,284 40	6,629,152 00	1,829,744 00
June	1	2	210	38	5	83	168	1	1	114,211 72	84,788 18	11,798,982 37	1,659,973 40
July	3	5	216	55	11	76	202	4	....	139,527 28	55,951 91	5,718,026 00	398,143 00
August	2	1	178	38	4	59	158	3	....	119,989 54	110,843 50	6,033,333 00	4,024,922 00
September	2	1	190	39	5	69	162	3	....	131,601 03	155,824 81	5,650,860 49	977,728 00
October	2	5	221	75	6	109	191	1	1	139,614 48	92,530 33	8,596,748 00	1,090,297 00
November	1	6	230	87	11	132	192	4	....	178,999 23	151,203 91	10,053,816 00	1,553,855 00
December	2	6	247	168	9	164	253	6	1	255,791 67	183,900 37	7,215,604 02	1,071,774 06
Totals	18	50	2,599	1,027	82	1,335	2,315	51	7	$2,328,245 78	$1,785,173 75	$101,826,491 77	$22,308,756 50

Causes of Fires and Alarms, from January 1, 1931, to January 1, 1932.

Automobile	893	Other careless use of matches	288
Rubbish, vacant lot	357	Defective wiring	120
Rubbish, near building	106	Electric appliances and motors	145
Dump	129	Home dry cleaning	6
Brush or grass	899	Flammable liquids near flame	39
Other outdoor fires	488	Kerosene lamps, stoves	94
False	911	Grease, food on stove	114
Accidental	224	Clothes, furniture too near fire	87
Needless bell and still	735	Spontaneous ignition	123
Rescue	143	Fireworks	27
Marine	18	Thawing water pipes	13
Out of city calls	50	Sparks from machines	6
Chimneys, soot burning	420	City gas and appliances	14
Defective chimney	59	Miscellaneous known causes	301
Sparks from chimney	126	Incendiary or suspicious	158
Defectively installed heater,	105	Unknown	218
Rubbish near heater	7		
Hot ashes	71	Total	8,661
Fuel oil burners	79		
Starting fires (kerosene or gasolene)	10		
Careless smoking	931		
Children and matches	147		

1931.	Fires Extinguished By						
	Extinguishers.	Buckets or Cans.	Chemical or Booster.	Hydrant Streams.	Pumper Streams.	Miscellaneous.	Citizens.
January	64	28	154	15	30	34	16
February	70	39	101	34	43	44	6
March	81	23	120	40	24	23	14
April	51	32	159	46	23	38	16
May	51	21	108	24	30	30	23
June	39	34	86	26	19	30	19
July	53	34	106	21	28	23	17
August	33	20	81	13	33	24	16
September	34	27	90	13	50	23	17
October	43	21	134	19	34	29	22
November	55	21	153	10	41	28	20
December	67	25	170	29	50	53	30
Totals	641	325	1,462	290	395	379	216

Fires Where Losses Exceeded $15,000.

Date.	Location and Owner.	Loss.
1931.		
Jan. 20.....	126–138 High street, G. A. Armstrong, Inc., *et al*.....	$85,246 66
Jan. 27.....	33 Lakeville place, Ella C. Adams *et al*.....	15,692 83
Jan. 28.....	118–122 Main street, Charlestown Furniture Company *et al.*	18,328 52
Jan. 29.....	155–165 Hanover street, Luna Restaurant Company *et al.*	15,439 92
Jan. 31.....	35 and 37 Sleeper street, Eldridge Baker & Co. *et al*....	188,794 01
Feb. 5.....	277 and 279 Northern avenue, Broomfield Manufacturing Company *et al.*	19,714 36
Feb. 6.....	969–985 Bennington street, Orient Gardens Theatre *et al.*	79,421 65
Feb. 7.....	2–10 Tremont street, Victory Knitwear Stores *et al*....	20,319 10
Feb. 8.....	41 and 43 Chelsea street, J. P. Coppleman *et al*.....	33,893 18
Feb. 10.....	74 West Second street, National Outlet Manufacturing Company *et al.*	20,767 21
Feb. 12.....	20–24 Newbury street, Elizabeth Arden Beauty Parlor *et al.*	27,088 07
Feb. 15.....	24 Wellington Hill street, C. Cohen *et al*.....	15,044 09
March 8.....	43 and 45 Kingston street, Hennessy and Lippa *et al*...	20,609 34
March 16.....	76–86 South street, Wolpert Shoe Company, Inc., *et al*..	108,203 13
March 23.....	108 and 110 Winthrop street, L. Goldstein *et al*.....	15,377 58
March 23.....	1337–1357 Washington street, Old Colony Furniture Company *et al.*	73,689 69
April 19.....	367–371 Broadway, Harvard Shoe Company *et al*.....	23,313 02
May 2.....	751 and 753 Shawmut avenue, A. Berkman *et al*.....	20,637 96
May 5.....	120 Business street, Atlas Garment Company *et al*.....	17,704 00
May 20.....	80–84 Pearl street, Wetmore Savage Company.....	89,920 09
June 19.....	76 and 78 Pearl street, Wetmore Savage Company.....	22,156 78
June 21.....	32 Brookledge street, P. H. Frank *et al*.....	24,017 00
Aug. 8.....	26 Portland street, F. and W. Lighting Company *et al*..	16,751 43
Aug. 15.....	10 Esmond street, J. Salvo *et al*.....	17,048 60
Aug. 29.....	449 and 451 Washington street, Touraine Glove Company *et al.*	21,326 15
Sept. 10.....	1024 and 1026 Boylston street, Fenway Furniture Shoppe *et al.*	16,345 35
Sept. 13.....	12 Kilsyth terrace, P. Caputo.....	31,921 18
Sept. 19.....	93 Cummings street, Daly Plumbing Supply Company,	56,384 00
Sept. 23.....	133 and 135 Essex street, Bay State Silk Company *et al.*	21,370 96
Oct. 25.....	540–544 East Broadway, M. J. Perkins Post No. 67, American Legion *et al.*	18,859 80
Oct. 26.....	364–370 Boylston street, Plotkin Brothers *et al*.....	21,238 74

Fire Losses.— Concluded.

DATE.	Location and Owner.	Loss.
1931.		
Nov. 17.....	12–16 Bromfield street, Collins & Fairbanks *et al*.....	$28,121 22
Nov. 23.....	1610–1622 Blue Hill avenue, W. T. Grant Company *et al.*	94,187 81
Dec. 16.....	427 East Eighth street, H. L. Lyons & Co. *et al*.....	56,236 00
Dec. 24.....	126–144 Commercial street, S. G. Shaghalion, Inc., *et al.*	15,316 05
Dec. 25.....	6–14 Portland street, P. Mucci & Sons *et al*.....	19,887 76
Dec. 27.....	7 Howland street, Mrs. S. Berkwitz *et al*.....	16,750 70

STATISTICS.

Population, January 1, 1932 (estimated)		786,976
Area, square miles		47.81
Number brick, etc., buildings		43,527
Number wooden buildings		93,197
Fires in brick, etc., buildings	2,186	
Fires in wooden buildings	1,522	
Fires out of city	50	
Not in buildings, false and needless	4,903	
Total alarms		8,661

FIRE LOSS FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1931.

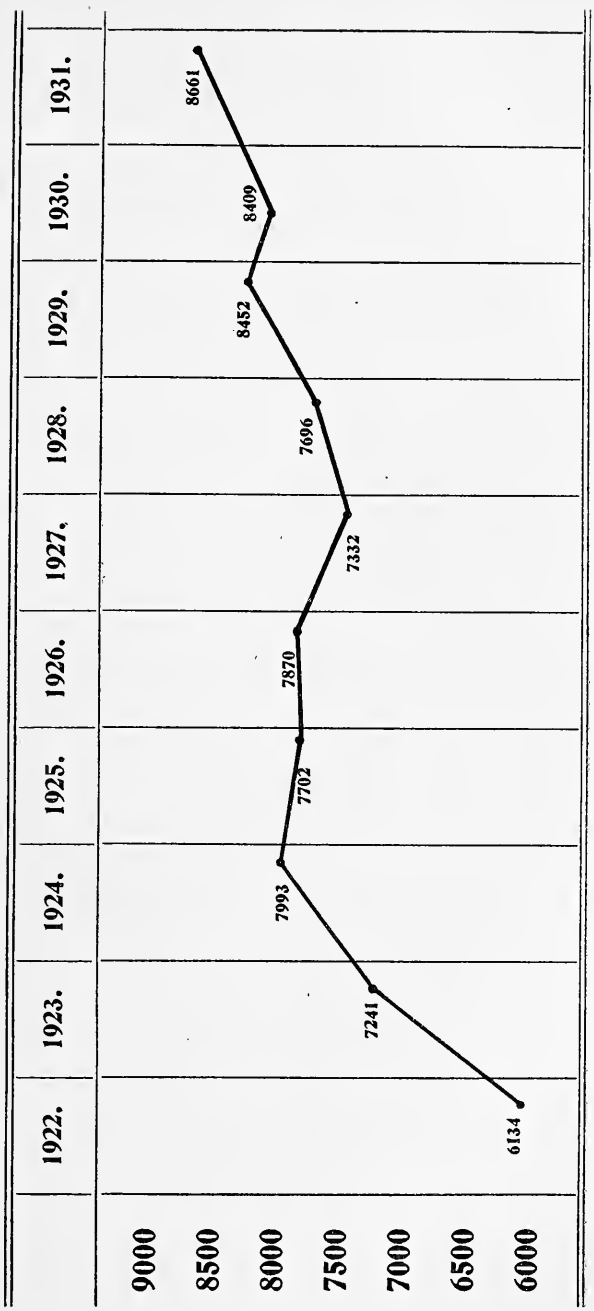
Buildings, loss insured	$2,328,245 78
Contents, loss insured	1,785,173 75
Total loss insured	$4,113,419 53
Marine loss	$50,613 85

YEARLY LOSS FOR THE LAST FIFTEEN YEARS.

Marine Loss not Included.

Year ending January 1, 1918	$3,981,227
" " " 1, 1919	2,822,109
" " " 1, 1920	2,577,584
" " " 1, 1921	3,139,566
" " " 1, 1922	4,010,201
" " " 1, 1923	3,304,595
" " " 1, 1924	6,286,299
" " " 1, 1925	4,735,595
" " " 1, 1926	5,407,070
" " " 1, 1927	5,199,965
" " " 1, 1928	3,694,642
" " " 1, 1929	3,887,250
" " " 1, 1930	4,129,926
" " " 1, 1931	4,593,622
" " " 1, 1932	4,113,419

GRAPHIC CHART OF ALARMS FOR PAST TEN YEARS.



Alarms for the Past Ten Years.

Year.	Bell.	Still and Automatic.	Totals.
1931	4,727	3,934	8,661
1930	4,601	3,808	8,409
1929	4,473	3,979	8,452
1928	3,867	3,829	7,696
1927	3,492	3,840	7,332
1926	3,762	4,108	7,870
1925	3,798	3,904	7,702
1924	3,640	4,353	7,993
1923	3,239	4,002	7,241
1922	2,733	3,401	6,134

Each fire is treated as having only one alarm.

John E. Fitzgerald Medal.

John J. Leary, for 1922.
Daniel J. O'Brien, for 1923.
Thomas F. Kilduff, for 1924.
Dennis M. Condon, for 1927.
Joseph P. Hanton, for 1929.

Walter Scott Medal.

Dennis M. Condon, for 1922.
James H. Curran, for 1923.
Edward J. Crowley, for 1924.
Gilbert W. Jones, for 1927.
John J. Boyle, for 1929.

Roll of Merit.

Carl V. Anderson.
Carl S. Bowers.
James J. Buchanan.
William O. Cheswell.
Dennis M. Condon.
Walter P. Corbett.
Michael J. Dacy.
James E. Downey.
Thomas H. Downey.
Dennis Driscoll.
Joseph P. Hanton.
Timothy J. Heffron.
Gilbert W. Jones.
Henry J. Kelly.
Martin A. Kenealy.
John J. Kennedy.
Frederick F. Leary.
John J. Martin.
Edward McDonough.
James F. McMahon.
Thomas J. Muldoon.
Edward J. Murphy.
Arthur A. Ryan.
Michael J. Teehan.

CITY OF BOSTON PRINTING DEPARTMENT