

Auditing and legal services	88.16	
Postage	83.90	
Office supplies	37.38	
N. C. State license and fees	58.00	
Intangible tax	15.96	
Total disbursements	\$34,071.95	\$3,554.01
Increase in cash balance during year (decrease in the second column, this line).....	\$ 933.49	*110.95
Cash balance July 1, 1945	20,080.77	2,105.44
Cash balance June 30, 1946	\$21,014.26	\$1,994.49

STATISTICIAN'S REPORT

By ALBERT W. BRINSON

Mr. Frank W. Bennett, President and Fellow Firemen of the North Carolina State Firemen's Association:

I herewith submit to you my report of statistics for the fifty-ninth year of our association.

Since I completed my last year's report we have seen World War II come to a close with the surrender of Japan, those cowardly, yellow-bellied murderers. We have settled down once more to the pursuit of life and happiness. Most of the service men who were members of your department and mine, and members of the North Carolina State Fire Association have returned home. In most cases they have returned to their former fire fighting services. We each and every one now have another big job to do and that is to conquer that devastating, murderous DEMON FIRE who is on a rampage like the United States has never seen before.

NATIONAL FIRE LOSS: Our growing national fire losses are most disturbing. What should worry all of us is that with the stopping of war losses our losses did not stop or slow down but have continued to increase. "The National Board of Fire Underwriters reports an alarming increase in fire losses. During June for example, the nation's loss totalled more than \$44,000,000, an increase of 29 per cent over June 1945. And the total for the first six months of this year reached the record-breaking figure of \$297,206,000. That is greater than the aggregate fire loss for any single full year from 1933 through 1940." I give you below the annual fire losses of the United States from the beginning of World War I through World War II:

1917	\$289,535,000	1933	\$271,543,000
1918	354,000,000	1934	271,197,000
1919	321,000,000	1935	235,263,000
1920	448,000,000	1936	266,659,000
1921	495,400,000	1937	254,959,000
1922	506,541,000	1938	4 258,477,000
1923	535,372,000	1939	275,102,000
1924	549,062,000	1940	285,879,000
1925	559,418,000	1941	303,895,000
1926	561,981,000	1942	314,295,000
1927	472,934,000	1943	380,235,000
1928	464,607,000	1944	423,538,000
1929	459,446,000	1945	455,329,000
1930	501,981,000	1946	See figures for the following six months.
1931	451,644,000		
1932	400,859,000		
January	\$49,808,000	April	\$52,153,000
February	51,759,000	May	46,094,000
March	53,252,000	June	44,000,000

It is estimated now that the 1946 fire loss will reach \$600,000,000. If so it will be an all time high. Death and desolation by fires this year are the greatest in our history. It is reported that a home is damaged or destroyed by fire every 79 seconds. A life is lost every hour or an average of 29 deaths a day by fires. In the big fire of the La Salle Hotel in Chicago on June 5, 61 persons lost their lives. It is reported that 5 out of the 29 daily deaths are children under five years of age. The fire alarm

bells in the United States ring every 53 seconds. All of America must do something about this death and desolation.

STATE FIRE LOSS: From the total fire reports rendered the Insurance Commissioner's office by the fire chiefs of North Carolina for the year of 1945 I find that there were 61 protected cities and towns represented in these reports and fire losses. There were 1,622 fires with a total loss of \$3,323,372, averaging \$2,049 for each fire. The per capita loss covering these 61 protected cities and towns (based on the 1940 census) is \$4.01 per person in population involved. I find included in the 1622 fires 871 dwellings with a total loss of \$410,567; 84 apartment houses with a total loss of \$91,613; 19 hotel fires, including 2 YMCA and one YWCA buildings, with many hundreds of human lives involved with a total loss of \$26,159; 10 churches with a loss of \$43,124; 8 school buildings with a loss of \$6,479; and 2 hospitals with the loss of \$7,643.

Out of the 1622 fires 25 were major ones with losses exceeding \$20,000 per fire. These 25 majors only represent 1 1/2 per cent of the total reported fires in North Carolina yet they represent a total loss of \$2,027,950 or 61 per cent of the entire state reported losses. Three of these 25 major fires had a total loss of \$1,075,000 or 32 per cent of the entire reported state loss.

Listed below are the 26 major fires, types of business, cities in which located, amount reported and probable cause, if known:

Business buildings in Mebane, \$44,000, unknown.
 Manufacturing plant in Mocksville, \$93,000, unknown.
 Business buildings, Greenville, \$22,450, from boiler room of pressing club.
 Business buildings in Lenoir, \$23,000, unknown.
 Manufacturing plant in Lenoir, \$25,000, unknown.
 Theatre and business block in Lexington, \$31,000, undetermined.
 Church, Statesville, \$35,000, started in furnace room.
 Dry cleaning plant and laundry in Charlotte, \$24,182, started from electric iron.
 Garage and Storage in Charlotte, \$44,038, back-fire from auto.
 Warehouse in Charlotte, \$68,000, unknown.
 Warehouse in Statesville \$32,600, unknown.
 Business buildings, Statesville, \$65,830, unknown.
 Taylor's Tobacco Storage Warehouse and exposed property in Winston-Salem, \$660,500, unknown, probably careless smoker.
 Warehouse in High Point, \$23,560, from fire in adjoining building.
 Furniture manufacturing plant, storage and stock room in Winston-Salem, \$89,000, unknown, probably careless smoker.
 Business building in Winston-Salem, \$32,500, unknown, probably careless smoker.
 Feed and flour mill in High Point, \$42,590, unknown.
 Department Store in Asheville, \$85,000, unknown.
 Department Store in Asheville, \$105,000, unknown.
 Department Store and Pool Room in Asheville, \$23,500, from fire in adjoining building.
 Talley Machine Shop in Greensboro, \$42,500, unknown.
 Hackney Brothers storage building in Wilson, \$52,900, spontaneous ignition from burlap bags.
 Shoe string factory in Gastonia, \$35,000, unknown.
 Laundry and dry cleaning plant in Siler City, \$21,000, unknown.
 Garage in Goldsboro, \$28,000, electric drop cord fell on gasoline soaked floor.

PROBABLE CAUSES OF FIRES: Out of the 1,622 fires reported probable causes listed include: 342 unknown, undetermined or not given; 157 from defective chimneys and flues and associated causes; 47 from electricity, not including lighting or electric irons; 26 from accumulation of trash, 186 from careless smoking; 151 from oil stoves used for cooking and heating; 98 fires on roofs; 2 curtains too close to electric lights; 59 from stoves, furnace and pipes thereof too close to woodwork; 2 rats and matches; 3 accumulation of dust; 30 carelessness with gasoline or derivatives; 16 from electric irons; 9 from Christmas trees; 7 thawing pipes; 46 from overheated stoves and furnaces; 20 from hot ashes; 39 children and matches; 12 from lightning; 25 from exposure; 29 spontaneous combustion; 8 from brooders; one moving picture film; 9 reported as of incendiary origin, grass fires, automobile, and fires from burning grease. The unclassified group includes the following: Radio near curtain became overheated, match got in ironer in laundry, boys playing with fire crackers set fire to cotton warehouse, light bulb in bed, tobacco falling on hot flue (this is a common cause for rural fires but is seldom encountered in cities or towns), smoldering ironing board put in closet, electric clock ignited cleaning fuel, truck load of cotton seed broke through floor allowing gasoline to flow out of tank on a short circuit in the wiring, a child ironing, sun rays through show window, working on auto carburetor set house on fire, Lee McCoy hit his wife over her head with a lighted kerosene lamp and set the house on fire, pig caught fire in a barbecue pit and set adjoining property on fire, comb caught on fire setting house afire, and a match ignited methyl chloride.

FIRE COLLEGE AND DRILL SCHOOLS: The 1946 Fire College and Drill School was held May 21, 22, 23 in the grand old host city of Charlotte, which has been host to the North Carolina State Fire Association and the North Carolina Fire College and Drill Schools on many, many occasions. The Fire College and Drill School was conducted by our own Sherwood Brockwell, Sr., and an able and outstanding faculty including North Carolina and out of state firemen. The College and School was attended by over 300 North Carolina State Fire Association members, many receiving their diplomas. The conductor, as usual, will file his detailed report.

The Eastern Carolina Fire College and Drill School was held in Greenville and the Sand Hills was held in Hamlet in 1945.

The Eastern Carolina Fire Association and the Roanoke River Fire Association were active during the year with the Roanoke River holding six meetings and the Eastern Association four. All these meetings were well attended and most of them well represented by state association officers. Various fire department problems and state association matters were fully discussed.

SCHOOL FIRES: There were only eight school fires reported by the Fire Chiefs of North Carolina to the Insurance Commissioner's office during the year 1945. These are only the school fires reported from the protected cities and towns in the state. There were some rural school fires which I have no way of reporting the loss. The eight school fires reported above had a reported total small loss of \$6,479. This no doubt is one of the smallest losses the state has had for many years. This loss of \$6479 to eight school buildings compares very favorably with 1944, with six buildings with a total loss of \$21,765. This record two year period, of the years of 1944 and 1945, surely reflects the fact that the school officials, teachers, fire department personnel and school children throughout North Carolina exercised real fire prevention. There was no death or casualty reported to a school child or teacher for the two year period.

FIRE TOLLS: The state death total of 1945 shows a total of 76 deaths recorded by the Bureau of Vital Statistics compared with 71 for the year 1944, caused by conflagrations of buildings. There was a total of 144 accidental deaths of men, women and children from outdoor fires, smoking in bed, playing with matches, scalding and handling of oil and other inflammable fuels, etc. This gives an increase in deaths of 5 over 1943. There were no recorded deaths of school children in this state during 1945.

AIRPLANE DEATHS: I am pleased to be able to report to you that there was a decrease of 190 deaths from airplane accidents and crashes, there having been 64 deaths during 1945 and 254 from the year of 1943. It was not possible to ascertain how many of these deaths were caused by burning planes. This large decrease in deaths was no doubt brought about, to a great extent, by the lessened activities of the various military groups.

FATAL OIL TRUCK AND TANKER ACCIDENTS: For the past number of years the North Carolina firemen have been much interested in the oil trucks and tankers plying our highways and streets. Through the courtesy of Major H. J. Hatcher, commanding State Highway Patrol and director of Highway Safety Division, I have been furnished with all reports of fatal oil truck and tanker accidents for the past two and one-half year period. I find there was a total of 23 fatal accidents with 26 persons killed and 37 injured. Five of these tankers burned, including the one that burned in Bethel, destroying considerable city property. Four of these accidents were in cities. Of these 26 killed 5 were burned to death. There were 9 tankers and cars burned in the tanker accidents. Thirty-nine vehicles were involved in fatal accidents including a bus and tanker collision which resulted in 7 deaths and 24 injured.

I am not quoting these fatal accidents as a matter of criticism but as a means of bringing to the attention of the state firemen the importance of urging city officials of all cities and towns which have not established oil tanker routes to establish truck and tanker lanes through the cities and towns in order to protect life and property. I wish to take this opportunity to thank Major Hatcher and his department for furnishing us with these reports.

ABOUT CONVENTION: The 1946 North Carolina State Fire Association's Convention could not be held this year due to a host city not being able to take care of a convention the size of ours. Each and every one of your officers did everything in his power to get some city to try to accommodate our convention but with no results. All cities contacted gave the same reason, that due to the hotel accommodations being inadequate they could not ask for the convention however much they would like to do so.

FIRE PREVENTION WEEK: Fire prevention and cleanup week was observed throughout the state of North Carolina by virtually every city or town. The campaign was conducted along the usual course of teaching cleanup and prevention of future fires. In the National Campaign the judges placed the 1945 Merit Awards for the United States standings with cities having a special merit grade of between 80 and 89 per cent in the order of their standing:

Columbus, Ohio
Tuscaloosa, Ala.
Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
Scranton, Pa.
Wichita, Kan.

Camden, N. J.
Fayetteville, N. C.
Bremertown, Wash.
New Orleans, La.
Roanoke, Va.

Hartford, Conn.
York, Pa.
Portland, Ore.
Stevens Point, Wis.
Atlanta, Ga.
Decatur, Ill.
Parkersburg, W. Va.
Rochester, N. Y.
Beatrice, Neb.
Marietta, Ga.
Oak Ridge, Tenn.
Toledo, Ohio
Indianapolis, Ind.
Topeka, Kan.
Erie, Pa.
Newburgh, N. Y.
San Antonio, Tex.
Cape Girardeau, Mo.
Schenectady, N. Y.
Chattanooga, Tenn.
El Dorado, Ark.

Wausau, Wis.
Watertown, N. Y.
Grosse Pointe Park, Mich.
Gadsden, Ala.
Sacramento, Calif.
Atlantic City, N. J.
Pine Bluff, Ark.
Pittsfield, Mass.
Richmond, Va.
El Paso, Tex.
Wilson, N. C.
Muskegon, Mich.
Athens, Tenn.
Allentown, Pa.
Newton, Kan.
Salt Lake City, Utah
Holyoke, Mass.
Johnson City, Tenn.
Baton Rouge, La.
Chelsea, Mass.
Marion, Kan.

It is of special interest to note that Fayetteville, North Carolina rates 19th and Wilson 33rd, out of the 52 highest rated cities in the Merit grade between 80 and 89 per cent. This surely shows that North Carolina cities are among the highest rated ones in the United States when it comes to fire prevention. Winning cities in North Carolina receiving First and Second positions and Honorable Mention were: Fayetteville 1st., Wilson 2nd. Cities receiving Honorable Mentioned were Greensboro, Asheville and Greenville.

APOLOGY TO CITY OF DURHAM FOR 1944: I failed to get the information of Durham receiving Honorable Mention in 1944. The plaque hanging on Chief Frank W. Bennett's office wall reads, "National Fire Protection Association Committee on Fire Prevention, Hereby certifies that Durham has been awarded, Honorable Mention for the State of North Carolina. Record of Merit October 8, 1944."

ABOUT PRESIDENT FRANK W. BENNETT: The firemen of Durham Honoring their leader on his 22nd. anniversary as chief of the department presented Chief Bennett with a plaque which reads as follows: "An Appreciation Presented to Frank W. Bennett Faithful and efficient public Servant from the Members of the Durham Fire Department on the twenty-second Anniversary of your Services as Our Chief Because of Your Intelligent Leadership, Kindly Consideration and helpful Cooperation you have not only endeared yourself for all time to the personnel of this Department, but also Have Earned the Genuine Esteem of The Citizens of Durham, North Carolina."

FIRE DEPARTMENT'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY: The Atlantic Steam Fire Engine Company No. 1 of New Bern, North Carolina last year on May 10 celebrated its 100th anniversary. This company was organized May 10, 1845 and was granted its Charter by the North Carolina State Legislature. The company has continued voluntary fire fighting services to the city of New Bern for 101½ years.

IN MEMORY OF CHIEF FRANK D. SHAW: Fire Chief Frank D. Shaw died August 11, 1946, after serving the Greensboro Fire Department for nearly 40 years. It is largely because of such fine leadership that the

Greensboro Fire Department attained and maintained a high degree of efficiency as is reflected in a very commendable fire record over a long period of time.

Chief Shaw had been an outstanding worker in the North Carolina State Firemen's Association, having been Vice President for two years during the years of 1930 and 1931. He served as President in 1932 and put his heart and soul into serving the firemen of all sections of the state. When the firemen met they always could count on Frank being there with that smile that his friends welcomed, and each fireman liked to call him by his first name. Frank and his able firemen acted as host to five annual meetings of the North Carolina State Firemen's Association with that same friendly spirit that Greensboro has always exhibited. The firemen of North Carolina will cherish his memory as a great fireman who served well and long.

With the closing of my statistician's report I wish to again thank my friend and your friend, Sherwood Brockwell, Sr., North Carolina State Fire Marshall, and the office of the Insurance Commissioner for their cooperation in helping me to secure the necessary data for my 1946 report.

ALBERT W. BRINSON, Statistician
