

BFD Reveals What Happens When A Fire Breaks Out in Birmingham

By ALICE E. MORGAN

The sound of a siren brings most of us on the alert, day or night. Should it be the police we are usually pricked by curiosity. An ambulance wailing its way through traffic brings a surge of sympathy to most of us. The sound of the siren on a fire truck tends to make all of us stop.

Once we have reached the conclusion that it is not heading toward our homes, we go about our way. We may stop and wonder just where it is, and if after dark cast quick glances into the sky for the tell-tale glow of flame.

Few of us know just exactly what happens when the word "fire" flashes into department headquarters. In Birmingham the message is received by a clerk who, if the

One incident has brought a standing rule to the BFD—get them to spell the name of the street.

Some time ago a lady called to report a fire. Her heavy southern accent made the street name sound like "Birwood", which is not in the district covered by the local department.

It left the men in a quandary. Immediately after starting to attempt to locate the fire, a second call came from the lady and again the address sounded like "Birwood."

BY THE TIME this call had been completed someone passing the house spotted the fire, which was in the roof, and phoned another alarm to headquarters. Finally finding out the fire was on "Berwyn" the trucks rolled.

Persons, now that the dial system has been installed in the city, have wondered about reporting

fire. It was simple before—they picked up the phone and the Bell telephone operator did the rest.

That is true today, dial or no dial. Persons reporting a fire after dark have only to remember that the signal to the operator is that hole on the dial located at the farthest "swing" from the finger stop. Find that stop, slip your finger into the hole below it, swing the dial as far as possible and report details to the operator.

It is a great help to firemen if, before leaving on a call, they are informed of the location of the fire and, if possible, its nature. This saves valuable time after the department arrives on the scene, especially when the fire has made no visible showing.

IT IS encouraging to know that in Birmingham the time between the reporting of the fire and the rolling of the truck is very short. Through constant practice of rou-

tine, the BFD is ready to start moving in about 25 seconds after the alarm is received. Night fires, because men must don clothing, requires about 10 additional seconds.

On each run made a senior officer in charge surveys the scene immediately. He decides what method will be used to fight the fire and whether or not additional equipment will be needed.

To simplify issuing orders, the department uses a code system. Arranged by numbers, the officer can speak one or two words and prepare the entire set up.

These codes, memorized by every man in the department, not only reduce the chance of error in repeating lengthy commands, but require less time than having to speak several sentences.

THE CODES are so arranged that they can be used singly or in groups, according to whatever

type of fire the department faces. The actual first step on arrival of the department, however, is to ascertain as to whether or not there are lives in danger. In the event there are persons in the building the rescue attempt comes first after which all efforts are concentrated on the fire.

If the senior officer in charge senses the need for additional equipment, his request is radioed back to headquarters by the police car which accompanies the department to all fires. The general alarm brings out volunteer forces.

The local department also has stand-by arrangements with the Royal Oak and Pontiac departments for assistance in such fires as the gas explosion of last December.

ONE OF THE biggest troubles encountered by the department is the motorist who does not pull into the curb. This should be done

Last Portion of E. Maple to Be Widened to Hunter

Widening of the north side of E. Maple, between Brownell and Hunter, will be accomplished in connection with the current development of the Sunoco station at that point, the city commission approved Monday night.

An assessment district for the Maple widening was created in 1928, but was not continued through to Hunter because the boulevard's construction plans were not available. The oil company will pay for the excavating and replacement of curb and sidewalk.

Commissioners approved a \$500 appropriation to pay for the new concrete to be laid between the new curbs and the existing pavement.

Plan Expert Submits Ideas to Commission

Charles Barr, city planning expert, submitted his final plans to the planning commission Thursday evening.

Mrs. Peter B. Loomis said the commission would study the plans and after several group meetings pass their final verdict on them. Efforts will be made to have a complete report ready for the next public meeting, scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 28.



WOMEN AT WAR—Two pistol-packing South Korean girls, Chong Sun Jin, at left, and Han Chi Ok, beside her, are combining culinary skills with Mata Hari work on the front lines in South Korea. Both in their 20's, the girls are valuable members of "Kelly's Boys," a combined American and South Korean guerrilla force which operates behind enemy lines. After a hard day over smoking rifles, they return to headquarters and whip up hot meals for the 100 South Korean members of "Kelly's Boys."



THE OLD AND THE NEW—A French farmer, carrying a scythe, watches a reaping machine at work in a farm district outside of Paris. Unusually good weather and abundant rainfall have combined to get France's harvest operations off to an early start this year.

Maim Street by Ralph Stein



BIRMINGHAM

is ready for



Dusty trees will soon sparkle with vari-colored announcements of another Birmingham Autumn. After a final scorching nights and days, summer will drag itself out and a refreshingly vital season will swoop in on the first-frost. Lawns will have to be raked, storm sash hung and countless other jobs will demand the attention of Birmingham householders. Wise Birminghamites will save time by doing their shopping right here in their own town.

These shoppers know an important thing—Birmingham merchants depend on them and therefore will carry just what they need for the new season. For weeks now, these friendly merchants have been selecting items for Fall in Birmingham. Long experience tells them what to stock up on and which new lines of merchandise local buyers will appreciate.

A compact shopping center is adding new stores and services constantly. More and more residents are realizing that they don't have to fight Detroit or Pontiac traffic to reach "big" stores. Convenient local shops provide all the "big" store services combined with a smaller community's friendliness and personal interest. Birmingham merchants are "ready for Fall" and waiting to help you.

THIS FALL - Do Your Shopping in BIRMINGHAM Stores

