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FIRE PROTECTION HISTORY-PART 116: 1937 (THE ZEPPELIN HINDENBURG)

By Richard Schulte

The forty-second Annual Meeting of the National Fire Protection Association included a presentation of the Report of Committee on Fire Record. The report was presented by Robert Moulton, the chairman of the Committee. The following is an excerpt from the report:

*“During the year 1937 there were twenty-three fires in the United States involving losses of \$250,000 or more each. This is a decrease of nineteen fires over 1936, and is the lowest number since 1933 when there were twenty-two such fires. During 1937 there were two fires in this classification in Canada, which compares with one fire in 1936. **The largest property loss of the year was the Zeppelin Hindenburg disaster on May 6 which took thirty-six lives in addition to a property loss of nearly four million dollars.** Six other fires caused losses of one-half million dollars or more each. **In addition to a large property loss, the London, Texas, school disaster on March 18 took 294 lives; the largest loss of life in a single fire in recent years.** A summary of each of the twenty-five large loss fires in the United States and Canada last year was published in the January 1938 Quarterly. This annual tabulation has proved to be of considerable interest to N.F.P.A. members and has been widely quoted in other publications.”*

The destruction of the Hindenburg in New Jersey is a well known historical event. Far less known is the explosion at a school in London, Texas.

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Source: “*Proceedings of the Forty-Second Annual [NFPA] Meeting*”, Atlantic City, New Jersey, 1938.