

FIRE PROTECTION HISTORY-PART 175: 1922 (THE NBFU REPORT)

By Richard Schulte

The support of the National Board of Fire Underwriters (NBFU) was essential for the growth and development of the National Fire Protection Association in the early days of the Association. The following is the transcript of the Report of the National Board of Fire Underwriters presented at the twenty-sixth Annual Meeting of the NFPA held in 1922:

“REPORT OF THE NATIONAL BOARD OF FIRE UNDERWRITERS

Mr. Geo. W. Booth: The relations between the National Board and the National Fire Protection Association are so close, by reason of common interest, both personal and technical, that no detailed report of the fire prevention activities seems to be called for.

The Committee on Fire Prevention and Engineering Standards has continued its investigations and reports on cities. With the renewal of construction work on water supplies and of equipment of fire departments, improvements in fire protection facilities are becoming more in evidence. Progressive fire department officials are taking hold of the idea of better training of men in fire methods and the use of equipment and I hope you will hear from some of them during this convention.

During the past year, progress in the standardization of hose couplings has continued in a most encouraging manner. In seven states well organized and consistent work has resulted in the standardization of fittings in about 300 cities and towns and still more effective progress in these and other states is to be expected during the coming year. The work is being handled by the local underwriting organizations, fire chiefs' associations or fire marshals' offices. The Railway Fire Protection Association has recently started an active campaign to cover all railway properties in the country. The standardization of six-thread couplings, which has been considered heretofore not practicable has been further investigated, with the result that it now seems feasible to treat these threads in such a way as to make a practical and reliable coupling for use until such time as they may be replaced through the purchase of standard fittings on all new hose and hydrants.

*This movement will stand as a monument to its foremost promoter and our friend, the late **F. M. Griswold**, who, up to the time of his death, was as actively interested as ever in its success.*

The missionary work of those enthusiasts in fire prevention, T. Alfred Fleming in the East and Jay W. Stevens on the Coast, has continued and you will doubtless hear from them later.

A large part of the time and attention of Mr. Woolson as Consulting Engineer of the Committee on Construction of Buildings has been occupied by his services as Chairman of the Building Code Committee of the United States Department of Commerce, and the first fruits of the efforts of that Committee will soon appear in the form of recommended minimum requirements for small house construction, which you will all agree is most timely.

Conditions throughout the country have been such that the staff of the Committee on Incendiarism and Arson has been extremely busy throughout the year and its members have given a good account of themselves.

The Committee on Public Relations through its publication, "Safeguarding America Against Fire." is securing an ever widening audience and constantly extending its sphere of influence.

This brief report confirms the relationship between the NBFU and NFPA. Further, the report mentions two of the "super stars" in the fire protection field at the time, Ira Woolson and F. M. Griswold.

While few remember F. M. Griswold's accomplishments, the standardization of fire department hose threads/couplings, clearly Griswold's accomplishments were an important advance in the field. Unlike F. M. Griswold's accomplishments, Ira Woolson's accomplishments in the field, work with the fire resistance testing, are better known.

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