

FIRE PROTECTION HISTORY-PART 77: 1914 (REPORT OF THE NFPA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE)

By Richard Schulte

The 18th annual meeting of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) took place in Chicago in 1914. Following the President's Address, the Executive Committee of the Association submitted the following report:

"REPORT OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

Mr. Stewart: In view of the important and interesting work to come before the Association as indicated in the program for the meeting, the report of your Executive Committee will consist of a brief reference only to the most important matters.

The Committee has held three meetings during the year. Its principal work was transacted at the first two meetings, and the minutes of these meetings have been published in the Quarterly for the information of members.

With regard to the special committees, three additions were made to the list during the year, dealing with the following subjects: --

Public Information.

Railway Properties.

Safety to Life.

You will hear the initial reports from these committees at the present meeting.

Particular importance attaches to many of the reports to be made to this Convention by the Special Committees. These reports are important largely because of the recommendations which they contain. We therefore urge careful consideration of the reports at your hands.

The disposition made by the Committee of the various matters referred to it by the Association at its last meeting is indicated in the minutes of the two meetings printed in the Quarterly.

We particularly bespeak your careful consideration of the report of the Committee on Public Information, and support of its plans and recommendations for future activities. *If we are to hope for substantial progress in our efforts to reduce the fire waste, the first essential is that our membership should be measurably increased.* We should more than double our present membership within the coming year, and each member is requested to charge himself with the obligation of securing at least one additional member. This should not be a difficult task. This Association, with the valuable co-operation of many of its members, notably the Credit Men's Association, American Institute of Architects and the National Board of Fire Underwriters, has aroused the public and administrative authorities in most of the states and cities to a sense of their responsibility to reduce the fire waste. We have thereby fixed upon ourselves the obligation of seeing that the interested authorities are made familiar with the information that is available, and the best way to utilize it in undertaking the reduction of the fire waste. A large and aggressive membership, familiar with the material available as the result of the nineteen years' work of the Association is, therefore essential. In view of all this, we recommend to the Association the appointment of a Special Committee on Membership.

The Industrial Board of the New York State Department of Labor, the first department of its kind to comprehensively provide for the safety of factory workers against the danger of fire, has welcomed assistance from our Association, and on invitation of your Executive Committee the entire membership of this Board journeyed to Chicago and spent two days in an examination of the test work at the Underwriter's Laboratories. This Board is charged with the preparation of regulations for the use of the New York State Department of Labor. All this is an indication of the assistance which our Association is capable of rendering. In the furtherance of similar work your Executive Committee voted to have its entire membership attend the *Philadelphia Fire Prevention Convention* in October of last year. This attendance of the members of your Committee at this Convention was large, and we believe contributed appreciably to the success of the Convention.

The Executive Committee approved and promulgated standards, or revisions of standards, on the following subjects, which were reported on at the previous Convention, and referred by you to the Executive Committee with power:---

- Signalling Systems, Amendment to Rules.
- Oil Ordinances.
- Shoe Factories.
- Automatic Sprinkler Equipments, Amendments.
- Gas Shut-off Valves.
- Oil Burning Equipments, Amendments.
- Dip Tanks.
- Code of Ordinances for Small Towns and Villages.

As is well known to those members who have been closely connected with the work of this Association, it has been the practice of the Association and its committees to, as far as possible, confer freely with all persons who it was believed could further the work in hand. For their continued assurance and also for the assurance of others, it is considered desirable and proper for this Association to record itself definitely as in favor of continuing this practice. Therefore the following resolution is recommended by the Executive Committee for adoption.

Whereas manufacturers and others may have a deep interest in the rules and specifications prepared by the National Fire Protection Association, and

Whereas it has always been the desire of the Association to avail itself of the best thought and experience of those having knowledge of the various subjects considered by the Association;

Resolved: That the committees of the Association be and are hereby requested to, as far as consistent with the best interests of the work in hand, confer with the manufacturers and others intimately concerned with the respective subjects under consideration; and that so far as conditions will permit, the Association do not take final action on these matters, including amendments, until said manufacturers and others have had reasonable opportunity to present their views, either directly or through proper committees; and that to facilitate this work the said manufacturers and others be and hereby urged to register with the secretary their names and addresses, and the subjects upon which they desire to be consulted.

Your Executive Committee has had occasion to feel especially appreciative of the sacrifices made by the various members of the Special Committees in devoting much of their time without compensation to the arduous work of constructing standards. Perhaps the only shortcoming, which has appeared to be general and caused considerable anxiety has been the delay each year on the part of the Committees in getting their report to the Secretary in time to have them printed and distributed to the members at least thirty days in advance of the meeting. Could this plan be actively carried out, it would substantially increase the opportunity for constructive criticisms from our members.

Finances. As an indication of the fact that the field of usefulness of our Association is steadily growing, the Treasurer's annual report shows a slight excess of expenditures over receipts for the first time in our history. This is in reality an encouraging sign of activity, and we feel sure that the new members we may expect to get will not only increase our usefulness, but help financially as well.

The President: Gentlemen, you have heard the report of the Executive Committee, through its Chairman, Mr. Stewart. What is your pleasure?

Mr. Lacount: I move that the report of the Executive Committee be accepted.

The President: Does that carry a motion to approve the resolutions?

Mr. Lacount: I suggest those be made a matter of another motion.

The President: Very well. The first motion is that the report of the Executive Committee be accepted.

(The motion carried.)

Mr. Lacount: Mr. President, it seems to me that these resolutions in the report of the Executive Committee clearly state the practice of the Association and its Committees, in this matter of conferring with manufactures and others as a means of obtaining suggestions in the preparation of our standards, and I therefore wish to move that these resolutions be adopted.

The President: It is regularly moved and second that the resolutions as presented outlining the policy of our Committees in the matter of conferences with manufacturers and others affected by our standards, be adopted. Is there any discussion?

(The motion was carried.)

The President: There was one other suggestion made in the report. It was that the Executive Committee be authorized to appoint a special committee on increase of membership. I would like to hear a motion in connection with that proposition.

The Secretary: I move that the matter be referred to the incoming Executive Committee.

(The motion carried.)

The President: The next item on the program is the Annual Resolutions. The resolutions prepared by the Executive Committee will be presented by past President H. L. Phillips.

Mr. Phillips: Mr. President, the following resolutions are presented as representing our platform for the coming year: --

RESOLUTIONS FOR 1914.

[See "Fire Protection History-Part 75" for the Resolutions for 1914.]

It should be noted that a special committee to address Safety to Life was formed.

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