

Wembley's Volunteer Fire Brigade, 1895-1936

When Wembley Urban District set up its Fire Brigade in 1895, the firemen were volunteers, mainly from among the Council's own employees. They would be summoned by a bell above the fire station, in St John's Road behind the Council offices, when an alarm was raised. The fire engine was an old hand-worked fire pump, which had belonged to the Harrow Brigade who had dealt with fires in the area before Wembley became a separate District. The firemen's first task would be to find two horses to pull the pump, either from the Council's yard at Ecclestone Mews, or from a local trader who was willing accept payment for allowing his horses to be borrowed.

Minutes of a Meeting of the Fire Brigade Committee of the Wembley Urban District Council held at the Public Offices, Wembley, on Monday, the 8th January 1900.

Present: Messrs. Brown (in the Chair), Brown and
Edmondson.

*The Minutes of the last meeting having been
circulated amongst the Members, were taken as read
and signed as correct.*

31. Insurance of Firemen. Letter National Fire Brigade
Union. Recommended that Clerk be instructed to fill
up proposal form to insure each man for £250 at an
annual premium of 7/- per man.

32. Retention of Firemen. Recommended that the
following revised scale of remuneration be adopted, viz.
Each member present within the first hour 2/6 and
1/- per hour for first 5 hours + 9d. per hour afterwards
6d each for refreshments.

The volunteers were paid a fee for attending training "drills", and an hourly amount for each fire they were called out to. Following a petition from the firemen the Council agreed a revised scale of remuneration from January 1900:

Each member present within the first hour, 2/6 [half a crown], and 1/- [one shilling] per hour for first 5 hours & 9d [nine pence] per hour afterwards. 6d [six pence] each for refreshments.

**An extract from the minutes of a
Wembley Fire Brigade Committee
meeting on 8 January 1900.**

[Source: Brent Archives.]

Wembley in the early years of the twentieth century was a mixture of rural farms and small villages that were growing together into a town with both housing and commercial developments. The District's population in 1901 was around 4,500, so that its Fire Brigade was not called out very often. The few serious fires usually involved hay stacks (or "ricks") at local farms, and claims against insurance companies to recover the cost of dealing with them. Some months there were no call-outs to report to the Committee, and matters such as the location of new hydrants, low water pressure in the Colne Valley Water Company's 4 inch mains or the broken rope on the fire station bell (replaced by an iron chain) were discussed.

**A minute from a Fire
Brigade Committee
meeting in March 1900.**

[Source: Brent Archives.]

*60 The Chief Officer reported :-
a. Fire at Hay & Chaff Shed 100 Acres Farm on
Wednesday evening the 21st instant. Further out-
burst was threatened on Friday and he therefore took
the necessary precautions to prevent the same. That he
understood the buildings were insured in the Alliance
Insurance Co and the contents in the County Fire Office.*

In February 1905 self-employed builder, Edward Cox, was the first member of his Sudbury family to join the Wembley Fire Brigade. His brother Ernest, a plumber, also became a part-time fireman in March 1911. Volunteers could apply to join the Brigade, and if accepted by a vote of the firemen, their name would be put forward to the Council's Fire Brigade Committee for approval of their appointment. The Brigade's Chief Officer at this time was a retired army officer, Major Fleetwood Buss, who lived at "Rosmoyné" in Harrow Road, opposite the site where a new Wembley Fire Station would be built in the late 1930's. The Major had drilled them into an efficient unit, which regularly won prizes at competitions across Middlesex. In April 1913 the Wembley Trademens' Association presented the Brigade with a Silver Challenge Cup, to be awarded each year to the winner of a competition for its most proficient fireman.

WEMBLEY VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADE - 1904.



W. HAYNES

G. BRILL · J. BROWN · B. ALCOCK · G. BATCHLOR
W. MORRIS · J. MANSSELL · E. J. COX · W. MANSSELL · G. RUMNEY
C. THOMAS · MAJOR BUSSE · MR. LEADER · J. FARREL
CHIEF OFFICER CHIEF OFFICER
OF WEMBLEY OF HARROW

Presented by Mr. MANSSELL

Wembley's Volunteer Fire Brigade, with their horse-drawn fire pump. Although dated 1904, the photograph must be slightly later, as E.J. Cox did not join the Brigade until the following year.

[Image courtesy of, and copyright, the London Fire Brigade Museum.]

By this time Wembley was considering the purchase of a new fire engine. On 29 October 1913 a special meeting of the Council agreed to pay £1,000 to Messrs Merryweather for a motor fire pump, an extension escape and other equipment. The vote was 6 to 3 in favour, after which one opposing Councillor resigned because of the considerable expense involved! When the motor fire pump was delivered in 1914, the Council decided to appoint one of the firemen as a full-time driver. On his first lesson with a Merryweather instructor, Driver W. Mansell found that it was very different from driving a horse and cart, overturning the vehicle and ending up in St Mary's Hospital, but he eventually passed his test.

With the outbreak of the First World War it was decided to cut the size of Wembley Fire Brigade from 15 men to 10, by not filling vacancies that arose. The volunteers were to receive a retaining fee of five shillings a year. The Committee also decided to train two relief drivers from among the firemen, and were told in December 1914 that J. Mansell and Ernest Cox '*...had been passed by Major Buss as efficient and capable men to drive the motor engine.*' They each agreed '*...to be on duty at the Engine House alternate weeks from 6pm to 10.30pm with one Sunday in four all day at a remuneration of 12/- per week whilst on duty in addition to ordinary fees for drills and turn-outs.*' When both of the Mansell brothers threatened to resign from the Brigade in 1915, Edward Cox, by then Senior Fireman, was also taught to drive the motor fire pump.

BIG FIRE AT GREENFORD.

Purex Works Burnt Out.

The "Purex" Lead Works at Greenford were burnt out on Friday night last week, the cause of the fire being unknown. Ealing Fire Brigade received the call at eight minutes past eleven, and Capt. Gravener, with six men, proceeded to the scene with the steamer. Harrow Fire Brigade was first on the spot with a motor engine, having been telephoned for by Mr. A. W. Perkin, J.P., of Greenford. Wembley and Acton Fire Brigades were also in attendance with their motor pumps, and Hanwell and Southall Brigades were there with their steamers. Owing to the bad condition of the roads, however, the three steamers were unable to get anywhere near the water. Even the motors experienced considerable difficulty in getting a supply, as the nearest water was the Grand Junction Canal, about half-a-mile away, from which it had to be pumped from one dam to another. Although unable to use their steamers, however, the men were of considerable use in other ways. The fire was burning furiously, showing a big glare in the sky which could be seen for some distance, and it was after 3.30 in the morning before the Ealing Brigade returned.

The works, which chiefly comprised a large wooden and corrugated iron structure, about 100ft. by 90ft., with a generating station attached, were completely burnt out and partly pulled down.

On the night of 2 February 1917 the Wembley Brigade was called out to help fight a blaze at the Purex lead paint works in Greenford. Harrow Fire Brigade were already on the scene, and the Wembley men were asked to stop the fire from spreading to a munitions factory next door. The water pressure from their hydrant was insufficient, so they used their skills to pump water from the Grand Junction Canal, half a mile away. By this time help was also on hand from the Acton, Ealing, Hanwell and Southall Brigades, and after four hours the flames were finally overcome. The Wembley firemen's action averted a disaster, as the munitions factory, National Filling Station No.28, was a large complex of wooden huts used for filling 6 inch diameter shells with high explosive charges and poison gas.

A report of the Purex Works fire from the "Middlesex County Times" of 10 February 1917, written from the Ealing Fire Brigade point of view as the newspaper was published there.

[Source: Ealing Local History Centre – local newspaper microfilms.]

Later that year, King George V set up the Order of the British Empire, awarding medals to civilians who had shown distinguished service during the First World War. In November 1920 Edward and Ernest Cox were among four Wembley firemen to receive these medals for their efforts at the Purex Works fire. Wembley Council had put forward the names of all its Brigade's men who attended the blaze, but the Home Office had limited them to a maximum of four. They decided to nominate the two most senior officers present, Chief Officer Wiggins and Superintendent Harris, and to let the firemen themselves choose the other two.

Part of the report of a Wembley U.D.C. meeting in November 1920, at which the Wembley firemen were presented with their Medals of the Order of the British Empire for Meritorious Service, from the "Harrow Observer" of 19 November 1920.

[Source: Brent Archives – local newspaper microfilms.]

O.B.E. MEDALS.

The Chairman said his next duty was an unique one: it was his privilege as Chairman of the Council to present four members of the Fire Brigade with the British Empire Medals. The war caused many factories to be erected within and on the borders of their district, and this necessitated arrangements being made for the attendance of the Brigade in case of fire. He had the good fortune to be present and to witness the work of the brigade on that particular occasion for which the medals were awarded. The fire was at the Purex Works, Greenford, and he well remembered the joy ride through the cold frosty air as they sped towards the scene. They found a tremendous blaze, and almost adjoining was the Greenford Filling Factory, where high explosives and shells were stored. The Wembley Brigade had instructions to fasten on to the second hydrant, their position being between the big blazing building and the filling factory. Of water there was insufficient, and the Wembley Brigade expressed their willingness to endeavour to reach the canal with their fire engine and pump the water from there. After surmounting great difficulties they succeeded in supplying the water, and ultimately the huge fire was got under control. It was the resource, initiative, and obstinacy of the Wembley men in sticking to their job that played a large part in overcoming the flames, which if they had spread to the filling factory would have caused incalculable damage and loss of life.

He then presented the medals to Chief Officer E. J. Cox, Third Officer E. Cox, and ex-Superintendent Harris, and regretted that ex-Chief Officer J. Wiggins was unable to be present to receive the award also.

Chief Officer Cox expressed his thanks to the Chairman for the kind words he had spoken about the Brigade. Every man did his best, and was worthy of some recognition.

Mr. Harris said he was in charge on the night of the big fire. Every man on that occasion did his duty, and no man did more than another, from the chief officer downward. They did not think of their own lives, for they knew that if the filling factory was caught Wembley would have suffered most.

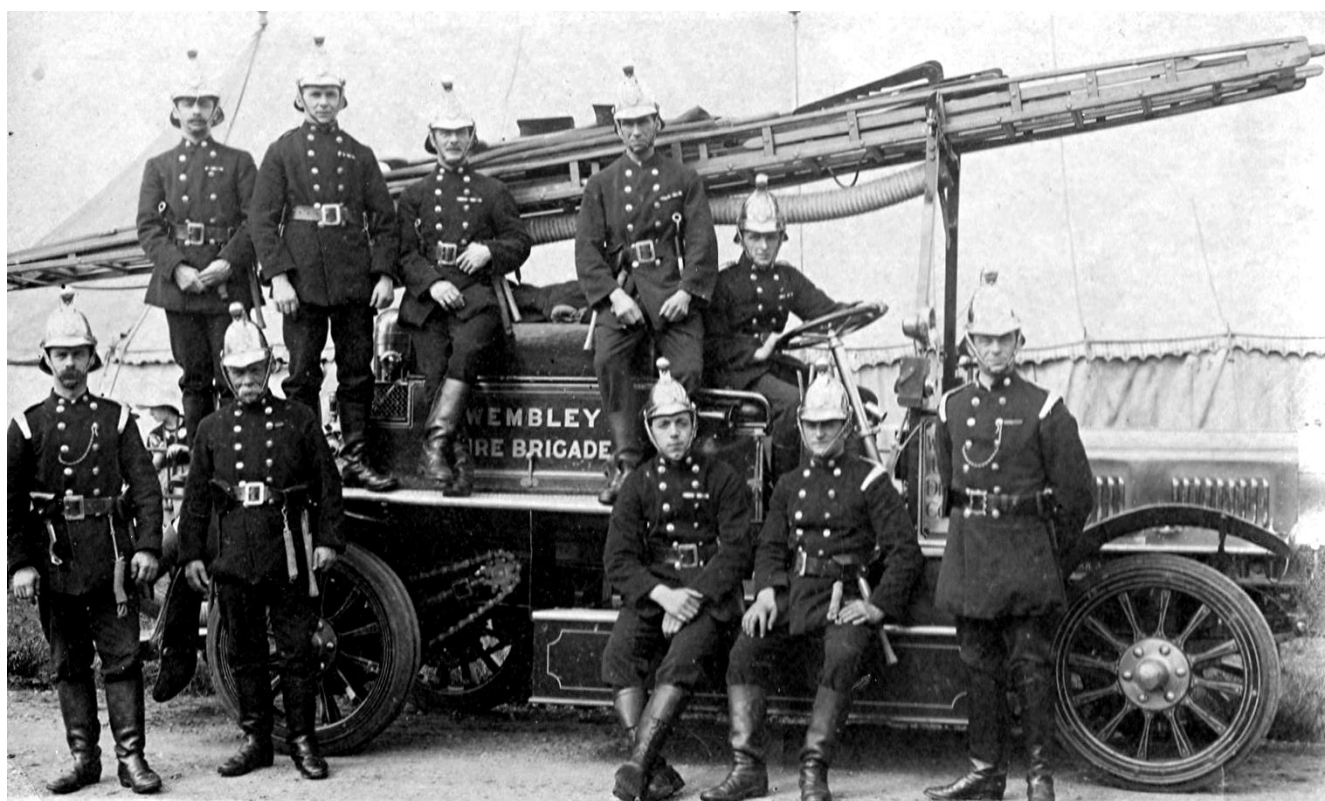
As part of the post-war reorganisation of Wembley Fire Brigade new rules were introduced from 1919 (see Appendix at pages 8-10), setting out duties, pay and other matters such as uniforms and insurance. As well as a full-time driver, the Brigade was to have three officers and twelve firemen. All members had to live within easy distance of the fire station, and had to report there immediately on an alarm being sounded. To assist with this, alarm bells were installed in each fireman's home, with telephones installed in the officers' homes. Men could be fined, or even dismissed, for failing to respond to an alarm.

A note about the Fire Brigade from the 1920 edition of the Wembley Guide.

[Source: Brent Archives – Wembley History Society Collection, Acc.351.]

The Council possesses a competent Fire Brigade consisting of chief officer, 2nd and 3rd officers, driver and twelve firemen, with a Merryweather Motor Fire Pump and escape ladders. The Council have now installed in the district an up-to-date Fire Alarm System with call posts in all parts of the district enabling the firemen to be called by means of a bell in each of their houses. The Brigade is well known for its smartness in turning out to fires.

Edward Cox was appointed Chief Officer of Wembley Fire Brigade in April 1919, with an annual retaining fee of £25, having been promoted to Second Officer the previous year. Ernest Cox, who had returned to duty as a fireman in January that year after being called up for service in the forces near the end of the war, was made Third Officer in June. Their nephew, William Stevens, joined the Brigade in May 1919, and their youngest brother Albert, who still lived at the family home in Myrtle Cottages, Sudbury, was elected as a fireman in January 1920, both after wartime army service. As a result, this photograph of the Wembley Fire Brigade, taken in 1920, includes four members of the Cox family.



Wembley Fire Brigade, with their Merryweather motor fire pump, in 1920.

[Photograph courtesy of Carol Snape, who sent a copy of it to Wembley History Society in January 2010.

It was from her family's collection, and the firemen were thought to include a brother and three uncles of her late grandmother, with surnames probably Cox or Stevens. We now know that Chief Officer Edward Cox is standing at the right of the picture, with Ernest Cox and William Stevens seated to his right.

Albert Cox is probably the fireman standing second from the left on the back of the fire engine.]

When William Stevens got married in 1925 it was Wembley's first Fireman's Wedding. As the couple left St John's Church the other firemen gave them a guard of honour, forming an arch with their hatchets, before they were driven to the reception at the British Legion Hall in Lancelot Road on the fire engine. Along with many other ex-servicemen, William Stevens had joined the local branch of the new British Legion. His bride, Cicely Southern, was the daughter of the Legion's Hon. Secretary, and the couple had met as members of the Legion's tennis club. Albert Cox (born in the same year as William, 1897, although being his uncle) was best man at the wedding, and had his own Fireman's Wedding in August 1926.



Aside: The Wembley "Fireman's Wedding" of William and Cicely Stevens. [Courtesy of Caroline Henney.]

Below: The Fire Brigade Committee minute of 21 July 1926, agreeing Albert Cox's "Fireman's Wedding".

[Source: Brent Archives.]

19. FIREMAN'S WEDDING. It being the unanimous wish of the Firemen that the Brigade should be in attendance with the Engine at the Wedding of Fireman A. Cox at St. John's Church, Wembley, on August 2nd next, it was **RESOLVED** that the Chief Officer be authorised to make such arrangements as he deems desirable therefor.

The British Legion, an organisation which looked after the interests of ex-servicemen as well as providing a sports and social club, had a number of other firemen as members. Generally, this was a benefit as it helped to maintain comradeship in the Brigade, but it did occasionally cause difficulties, as shown by this paragraph from a letter sent many years later to Joan Stevens (William's daughter) by her "Aunt Southern":

It happened that a club for ex-service men had been opened in Wembley after World War 1, which was known as the Wembley Legion. Many of the firemen belonged to it. They had a cricket team, and usually played in the local park on a Saturday afternoon. I was in the park one day when they were playing against a team from a neighbouring town. The Legion were fielding, when suddenly the fire-bell rang out through the summer air. As one man, the home team turned and raced for the gates, leaving the visitors to stare after them in astonishment.

[Extract of letter courtesy of Caroline Henney.]

The number of people and buildings in Wembley had grown considerably since 1900, especially after the British Empire Exhibition of 1924/25 had attracted people to move to this

leafy suburb. New housing estates meant that new fire hydrants and fire alarm points had to be installed, and regularly tested. The number of call-outs increased, even though some were false alarms. Motor cars and lorries catching fire were a common reason for calls.

62. FIRES The Chief Officer reported that since the last meeting of the Committee, the Brigade had been called to the undermentioned fires:-
February 22nd - Chimney at 14, Norton Road.
February 28th - Shed at rear of 108, High Road.
March 4th - Motor Car in Park Lane.
March 13th - 2, Canterbury Villas, Sudbury.

A Fire Brigade Committee minute from March 1926. [Source: Brent Archives.]

Chief Officer Cox proposed that the Brigade should have a second vehicle, which could respond quickly to calls with a small number of men, rather than the motor fire pump having to wait for a full crew to reach the fire station before setting out. In July 1924 the Council agreed to spend £790 on what it called a "first aid machine", which would carry light ladders, fire extinguishers and have a 40 gallon water tank with a small rotary pump. With the growing workload, the number of Brigade members was increased to 20 in 1928.

24. FIRE AT 26 PARK PARADE The Chief Officer reported as follows:-
" On Saturday, August 18th, at 1.40 a.m., we received a call by phone and
"also from Wembley Hill Standard to the above address, arrived on the scene
"with First Aid Machine, Chief Officer and four men within 10 minutes of
"receiving the call. This particular fire proved the usefulness of this
"machine as within one minute water was being played on the fire from the
"40 gallon tank carried on the Engine thus enabling the other firemen in the
"meantime to get connected up to the hydrant almost as soon as the temporary
"supply from the first Aid Machine became exhausted. It is particularly
"gratifying to me to be able to report on the promptitude with which the
"Brigade turned out at this hour of the morning.
" The shed with 3 cycles and other goods were destroyed and workshop of
"No. 24 damaged."

A minute from the Fire Brigade Committee meeting on 20 October 1926. [Source: Brent Archives.]

Just as his had been the first Fireman's Wedding, William Stevens also received Wembley's first Fireman's Funeral six years later when he died in April 1931 after a short illness, aged just 33. Every member of Wembley Fire Brigade turned out, together with representatives from the Harrow, Wealdstone, Willesden and Chiswick brigades. The fire engine, carrying his uniform and many wreaths, formed part of an impressive funeral procession from St John's Church to Alperton Cemetery.

The 1931 census showed that Wembley's population had grown to 48,500. It continued to increase over the next few years, and when the rapidly developing next door District of Kingsbury was merged into Wembley Urban District in 1934, the Council had to review how its services were organised. By the end of the year it was interviewing men from other brigades, and five full-time professional firemen took up duty in January 1935. The Fire Brigade Committee also thought that they needed a full-time Chief Officer. Edward Cox, who was now approaching the Brigade's official retirement age of 60, said that he would be willing to take on the role, but when he was told that his appointment would be reviewed after twelve months, he changed his mind.

CHIEF OFFICER OF THE FIRE BRIGADE:

Your Committee received a letter, dated 9/4/35, from Chief Officer Cox relative to his service with the Council and containing a reference to the Appointment of a permanent Chief Officer which, for reasons mentioned in his letter, he had decided, after careful thought, not to apply for.

With regard to Chief Officer Cox your Committee desire to record their appreciation of his service. Mr. Cox joined the Wembley Brigade in 1905 and was made Senior Fireman and Driver in 1916. In 1918 he was promoted to Deputy Chief Officer and in April, 1919, was appointed part-time Chief Officer, an appointment which he has held with credit to the present time. Chief Officer Cox will relinquish his appointment with the Council on the 30th June, 1935, and before he sever his association with the Brigade the Committee desire to acknowledge the valuable services which Mr. Cox has rendered to the town and district of Wembley.

The Committee, therefore,

RECOMMEND the Council to pass the following resolution and that such resolution be sealed with the Common Seal of the Council and presented to Chief Officer Cox in appreciation of his long and faithful service:—

RESOLVED—That the Council place on record their appreciation of the long and faithful service rendered by Chief Officer Edward J. Cox to the town and district of Wembley as a member of Wembley Fire Brigade extending over a period of 30 years, 16 of which he has held the part-time appointment of Chief Officer; his responsibilities have been greatly increased during the course of his period of service, largely as a result of the rapid growth and development of the district, the population of which is now estimated at 100,000; he has carried out his duties in a most efficient and exemplary manner with credit to himself and all concerned and in recognising the services of such a loyal officer who throughout has held the respect and confidence of the Council, they desire to express to Chief Officer Cox their best wishes for the future and hereby appoint him Honorary Chief Officer of the Wembley Brigade.

Your Committee

FURTHER RECOMMEND—That the request of Chief Officer Cox to retain his uniform and fire fighting kit be granted.

MERVYN R. HARLEY,
Chairman.

An extract from the minutes of Wembley's Fire Brigade Committee meeting on 9 May 1935.

[Source: Brent Archives.]

At a special inspection of its Fire Brigade by members of the Council on 1 July 1935, Chief Officer Cox retired after three decades faithful service to the District, retaining the rank of Honorary Chief Officer. Ernest Noah, the new full-time Chief Officer recruited from the Stoke-on-Trent Fire Brigade on a salary of £400 p.a., was introduced to the firemen. Bars to their long service medals were presented to Charles Foskett (20 years) and Albert Cox (15 years), as well as the 30 year bar to Edward Cox.

He was also awarded a retirement gratuity of £250 at a Council meeting a few months later.

On 31 January 1936 Ernest Cox (by now Second Officer) and Albert Cox were in the last group of eleven volunteers to be discharged, as Wembley's fire-fighters became a wholly professional Brigade. The departing men were each given a final payment of £1 for each year of service, with an extra amount for the retiring officers. In thanking the men for their loyalty and efficiency, Councillor Harley, the Fire Brigade Committee Chairman, regretted that:

'It had been found necessary to dispense with their services in view of the rapid growth of the district, which demanded that a full-time brigade should always be available.'

A report from the "Wembley News" of 7 February 1936.

[Source: Brent Archives – Public Services: Fire cuttings folder.]

The new Wembley Fire Brigade had four officers and twenty-one men, split into three shifts to provide 24 hour cover. Before the end of 1936 they were handling 16 calls in a two week period, including several ambulance calls, which at that time were also part of the Brigade's duties. While confirming the need for a full-time, professional team of firemen, for a District that was about to achieve Borough status, it takes nothing away from the service that Wembley residents received from their part-time volunteer fire-fighters for over forty years.

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**WEMBLEY FIRE
BRIGADE**
7/2/36
Volunteer Service Ends

**PRESENTATIONS FROM THE
COUNCIL**

The services of the volunteer members of the Wembley Fire Brigade came to an end on Saturday, when the brigade assumed full professional status. At a short informal ceremony in the fire station recreation room, Councillor M. R. Harley, chairman of the Fire Brigade Committee, made presentations of cheques to the volunteers on behalf of the Council. Each received one pound for every year of service, the officers being allowed extra payment in respect of their years as senior members of the brigade.

Eleven members of the volunteer brigade were present, and Councillor Harley was accompanied by the chief officer, Mr. E. Noah.

Loyalty and Efficiency

Councillor Harley thanked the men for their services. The Council were not unmindful, he said, of their loyalty and efficiency. It had been found necessary to dispense with their services in view of the rapid growth of the district, which demanded that a full-time brigade should always be available.

The chief officer added his own thanks to those of Councillor Harley. He had not known them long enough to become intimately acquainted, and yet he felt certain that what had been said of them was true. He hoped that they would not consider their association with the brigade as completely finished. They would be welcomed in the station at any time.

Those to receive honorariums were: Second Officer E. Cox, £41; ex-third officer E. Foskett, £24; and Firemen A. Sturgess, £24; A. Rollings, £21; E. Harrison, £17; W. Little, senior, £17; A. Cox, £17; L. F. Clarke, £11; C. E. Dowse, £9; A. Miller, £7; E. Brazier, £7; and W. Little, junior, £7.

On Saturday the brigade began a system of three shifts. There are now the chief officer, the second officer, Mr. A. T. Beal, the third officer, Mr. V. G. Evans, and a sub-officer, Mr. H. Edwards, with 21 men. Three squads of seven have been arranged, two doing duty during the day and one at night. The night duty squad sleep at the station and are available for instant turn-out should a call be received.

Acknowledgements: This short history only exists because of an enquiry made by Carol Snape in January 2010 about the photograph shown on page 4. Initial research showed that very little had been written about Wembley's Volunteer Fire Brigade, and that there was an interesting story which deserved to be told. I am grateful for the further "family history" details provided by Carol, and her cousin Caroline Henney, which helped to shape and add human detail to that story. My thanks also go to Rosamund King, Malcolm Barres-Baker and Rachel Oliver at Brent Archives, Dr Jonathan Oates at Ealing Local History Centre and Elena Payami at the London Fire Brigade Museum for their help in finding material for this piece.

APPENDIX: Wembley Fire Brigade Rules.

The following are facsimile pages from the minutes of Wembley U.D.C.'s Fire Brigade Committee meeting on 6 August 1919, showing the New Rules which applied thereafter.

	<p>REVISION OF RULES.</p> <p>A duplicated draft of the Proposed Revised Rules having previously been circulated amongst the Members of the Council the same were carefully considered and amendments made thereto</p> <p>RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND that the Rules as amended be submitted to the Council for approval as follows:-</p> <p><u>PROPOSED NEW RULES</u></p> <p>for the</p> <p><u>W E M B L E Y F I R E B R I G A D E .</u></p>
1. Constitution.	<p>The Brigade shall be known as the WEMBLEY FIRE BRIGADE and consist of Chief Officer, Second and Third Officers, Driver and Twelve Firemen.</p> <p>The Brigade shall be under the control of the Council and managed by the Fire Brigade Committee of the Council.</p>
2. Election of Members.	<p>The Chief Officer appointed by the Council will be responsible for the maintenance of efficiency, good conduct, order and discipline of the Brigade; the carrying out of duties and the preservation and upkeep of apparatus, etc.</p> <p>The nomination of second and third officers shall be made by the Chief Officer and subject to the approval of the Fire Brigade Committee shall be appointed accordingly.</p> <p>Firemen shall be nominated by the Chief Officer and elected by the votes of a majority of members present at a general meeting of the Brigade subject to confirmation by the Fire Brigade Committee of the Council.</p>
3. Membership.	<p>Applications for membership shall be made in writing to the Chief Officer.</p> <p>Each member shall be supplied with a copy of these rules and shall subscribe his name to the official copy in a book kept for that purpose.</p>
4. Uniform.	<p>Members of the Brigade shall be furnished with Uniform consisting of helmet, undress cap, tunic, trousers, boots, lifeline, belt, axe and case, and leggings. Firemen will be held responsible for the preservation of uniform and equipment and on leaving the Brigade must at once deliver up all articles in a good and clean condition, fair wear and tear excepted. Uniform shall only be worn when on duty or by special permission of the Chief Officer. If worn contrary to this regulation a penalty of 2/6d shall be incurred for each offence.</p>
5. Residence of Members - Notice of Absence.	<p>Members must reside within easy distance of the Fire Station and on change of address must notify the Chief Officer at once. Any member leaving the district for 24 hours or more must inform the Chief Officer or Officer in charge.</p>
6. Retirement from Brigade.	<p>Members wishing to resign shall give fourteen clear days notice to the Chief Officer in writing of such intention. Members on reaching the age of 60 years or by reason of inefficiency or any other reasonable cause shall be called upon to retire, from active duty.</p>

Fire Brigade Committee. 6th August 1919.

- Drills.** 7. Drills shall be fixed in advance by the Chief Officer and the date and times appointed posted on a Board at the Fire Station. There shall be at least one drill per week and such additional drills as may be considered necessary. Members must punctually attend unless prevented by illness or other reasonable cause. A Register of Drills shall be kept and the names of members present recorded therein. No fireman shall be considered present unless answering the roll call at the time appointed for drills. Failure to attend drills shall be punishable by a fine of 2/6d for each offence.
- Fires.** 8. On the alarm of Fire all members of the Brigade must at once proceed to the Fire Station. Any member failing to respond shall be reported to the Fire Brigade Committee who are empowered to inflict a fine not exceeding 10/- or dismiss the member offending.
- Disposal of Fines.** 9. All fines inflicted shall be paid into the Prize Fund of the Brigade.
- Withdrawal of Brigade after Fire.** 10. On withdrawal of Brigade after a fire the Chief Officer or Officer in charge will leave a sufficient number of Firemen in charge of the premises who shall be paid at the same rate per hour and for refreshments as for attendance at fires. The Brigade shall be allowed to attend fires outside the district at the discretion of the Chief Officer. Reports of Fires shall be recorded by the Chief Officer in a book set apart for that purpose.
- Gratuities.** 11. No individual member of the Brigade shall receive any money or remuneration for any service connected with his duty.
- Wages.** 12. All payments due to Members will be made by the Surveyor to the Council. Payments will be made to members on the following scale or such variations thereof as may from time to time be sanctioned by the Council;- for services rendered in accordance with these rules and as certified by the Chief Officer for attendance at fires:-
- Attendance at Fires.
- | | If answering
the call. | Rate for 1st Hour
& each succeeding
Hour. |
|---------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Chief Officer..... | 2/6d | 3/- |
| Second Officer..... | 2/6d | 2/6d |
| Third Officer..... | 2/6d | 2/- |
| Relief Driver | 2/6d | 2/- |
| Firemen | 2/6d | 1/6d |
- Refreshments at Fires.** 13. The following amounts shall be paid for refreshments at fires. All members attending 6d. each for the first hour and 6d. each for each further period of 2 hours. Labourers 3d per hour. The Chief Officer shall have power to provide refreshments or certify additional expenditure for the same where necessary.

[Source of these pages: Brent Archives – Fire Brigade Committee minutes.]

The following records of Wembley Urban District Council at Brent Archives were referred to in researching this history:

Fire Brigade Committee Minutes:

Acc. 1977128/27/1 - 1900 to 1914;

Acc. 1977128/27/2 – 1914 to 1925;

Acc. 1977128/27/3 - 1925 to 1930.

Public Health (& Fire Brigades) Committee Minutes:

Acc. 1977128/15 – 1930 to 1937.

Fire Brigade Committee. 6th August 1919.

- Salvage.**

14. The above rates of payments shall be made to members engaged upon Salvage work. Members who are also employees of the Council will, if acting during their usual working hours, be paid accordingly and their ordinary wages deducted or allowed for as the case may be.
- Payment for Drills.**

15. Each member answering the roll call and completing the drill shall be paid:-

Chief Officer	5/6d
Second Officer	3/-
Third Officer	3/-
Firemen	2/-
- Calculation of Time.**

16. Time for payment shall be calculated from the moment of leaving the Fire Station until return or upon completion of salvage duty if continuous, otherwise the actual time occupied in salvage to be added and shall be certified by the Chief Officer or Officer in Charge at the completion of the work.
- Insurances.**

17. Each Member of the Brigade shall be insured against accidents or injuries occasioned during the course of or discharge of his duties as a Member of the Brigade at the Council's expense as follows:-

Chief Officer. £1000 on death or permanent total disablement, £500 permanent partial disablement, 26 per week for temporary total disablement not exceeding 26 weeks and 30/- per week for temporary partial disablement.

Other Members of the Brigade. £250 on death or permanent total disablement, £225 permanent partial disablement, 45/- per week temporary total disablement through accident for a period of 26 weeks, after which the legal liability indemnity to apply.
- Alteration of Rules.**

18. The Council reserve the right to make such alterations to these Rules by resolution from time to time as may be considered expedient. Notice of any such alteration shall be posted upon the Notice Board at the Fire Station and be binding on the Members of the Brigade as from the date thereof.



The former Wembley Fire Station in St John's Road, being used as an ARP depot c.1939.

[Source: Brent Archives – Wembley History Society Collection, Acc.1060/84.]