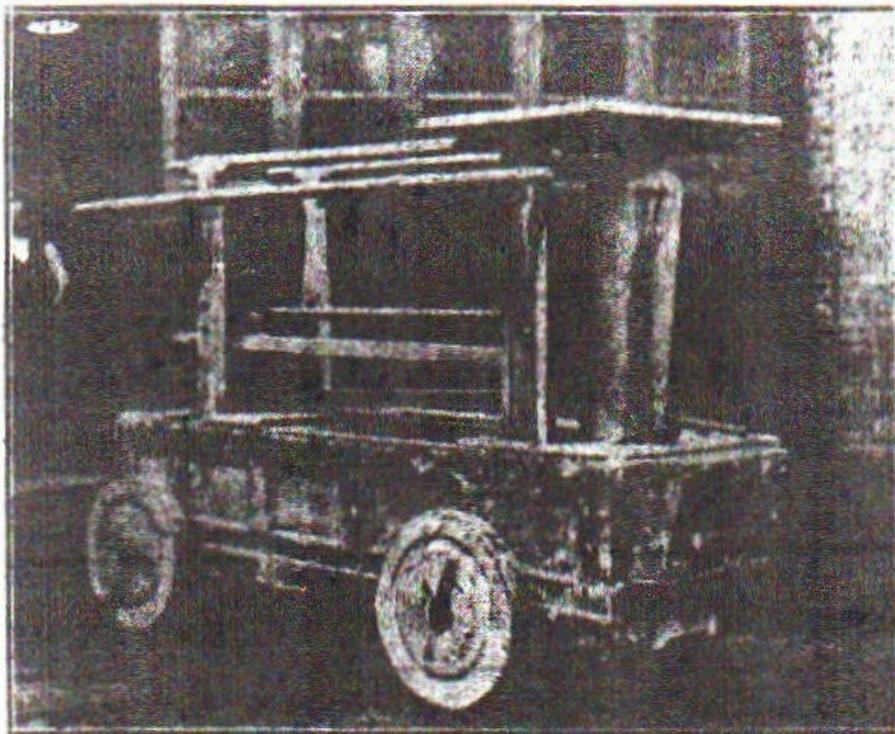


200 Year Old Fire Engine on Loan to Sheffield Fire Brigade



Yet another fire-fighting relic has been loaned to the Sheffield Fire Brigade.

It is a Newsham fire engine dated 1725, which has been loaned by the Wirksworth Urban District Council. This engine arrived at the Sheffield Fire Station today. It differs from the one recently loaned by Thorne in a number of minor details. The latter, which is more recent by nearly a hundred years, can only be operated by hand, but the Wirksworth engine has further attachments, so that it can be used by foot pressure as well. Inside the outer bars, which are worked up and down violently by hand, there are two boards upon which other men may stand, thus supplementing the manual labour with considerable foot pressure, giving a much more forcible jet of water. Also, it doubtless cause men whose duty it was to pour water into the engine to work much harder.

The Sheffield Fire Brigade, which is one of the most efficient in the country, now possesses a museum of considerable interest. This is largely due to the efforts of Chief Superintendent Breaks, who takes much interest in fire-fighting in all its phases.

The advance in fire-fighting since the days of the Wirksworth engine to the present day is astounding.

In 1725 the engine was stored in any convenient place, probably a barn. When there was a fire in the neighbourhood the brigade was summoned, either by vocal efforts or by the firing of a maroon or gun. The members of the brigade arrived from various parts of the village, and, if the fire was any distance away, the whole contraption was lifted bodily

onto a farm cart and removed with the aid of a horse. On arrival, water was fetched in buckets from the nearest source, and poured into the engine, while men worked mightily on the handles and boards.

And now, in the mechanical age, news of the fire is conveyed by electricity to the fire station and reproduced by machinery. A switch in the Superintendent's office a voice booms out commanding attention. It is the voice of a fireman at the telephone. With the turn of a lever bells are set clamouring in all parts of the building. An engine suddenly roars into life – all done by machinery.

Men still dressing themselves, climb on to the machine, which roars out through doors which have automatically swung open, and in a few seconds, is on its way to the fire, carrying with it fifty gallons of water.