

State of Iowa
1930

NINETEENTH ANNUAL REPORT
OF
STATE FIRE MARSHAL
FOR THE YEAR 1929

JOHN W. STROHM
State Fire Marshal

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Des Moines

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Des Moines, Iowa, January 31, 1930.

HON. JOHN HAMMILL, *Governor of Iowa,*

SIR: In compliance with the provisions of law, I have the honor to submit herewith the Nineteenth Annual Report of the affairs of this office covering the period beginning January 1, 1929, and ending December 31, 1929, both dates included.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN W. STROHM,
State Fire Marshal.

PROCLAMATION
Fire Prevention Week

To the People of Iowa:

For many years past it has been the practice to set aside a week during the autumn months to be known as Fire Prevention Week. The principal object of this week is to direct attention to the unnecessary civic loss caused by fire and to inspire public activity against such losses which annually destroy the people's resources. That much good has already been accomplished in this direction is shown by the fact that there was a reduction of \$6,021,052.00 in the fire losses of the United States in 1928 over those of 1927. It is with pardonable pride that I point to the fact that Iowa reduced her fire losses \$1,070,309.00 during the same period of time.

Believing that fire prevention is the patriotic, as well as the economic duty of every citizen of Iowa, I hereby proclaim October 6th to 12th as

FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

and I urge every citizen to make a special effort to reduce fire hazards as all fire losses are paid by society in general and the average individual bears his share of the burden. I specially request that a portion of the day, Friday, October 11th, be devoted to fire prevention educational exercises, especially in schools.

The pulpit, press and radio in the past have rendered valuable service, and are once again relied upon to call the people's attention to the necessity of each doing his part. It is only through concerted action that the lives and properties of all may be made secure.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Iowa.

(Seal)

Done at Des Moines, this 12th day of July, A. D., 1929.

By the Governor.

ED. M. SMITH,
Secretary of State.

JOHN HAMMILL,
Governor.

PROCLAMATION
Fire Prevention Week

STATE FIRE MARSHAL

Appointed by the Governor. Term, Four Years. Expires July 1, 1931

Office	Name	Legal Residence	Birthplace
Fire Marshal	John W. Strohm	Clinton	Iowa
Deputy	G. G. Shanafelt	Sigourney	Iowa
Assistant Deputy	Sam R. Starr	Dubuque	Illinois
Assistant Deputy	F. W. Scharfenberg	Davenport	Iowa
Stenographer and Clerk	Olive R. Sly	Boone	Iowa

The entire expense of the State Fire Marshal's office is paid out of the general revenues of the State.

ANNUAL REPORT OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL

To All Township Clerks, Fire Chiefs, and Mayors:

In the month of December, 1929, this office received a report of a fire which occurred in April, 1929, stating that the same was of incendiary origin, and should be investigated.

Reports of this kind so long after the fire has occurred are useless to this office, insofar as an investigation is concerned. Therefore, we ask that you cooperate with us and get all fire reports to this office at least once each month.

In case of incendiary fires, the reporting officer is urged to report at once and to take charge of the premises and preserve all evidence until a representative from this office reaches the scene of the fire.

Section 1625 of the Code, 1927, provides a penalty of \$5.00 for failure to report a fire within one week from the date of the fire.

To All Chiefs of Fire Departments:

We wish to call your special attention to Section 1632 of the Code, 1927, as amended by the Forty-third General Assembly of the State of Iowa:

Section 1. Section sixteen hundred thirty-two (1632), Code, 1927, is amended, revised, and codified to constitute two sections and to read as follows:

"1632. *Authority to Enter and Inspect.* The State Fire Marshal, his deputies and inspectors, in the performance of their duties, shall have authority to enter any building or premises and to examine the same and the contents thereof.

"1632-c1. *Additional Authority.* In order to effect the purposes of this chapter, the chief of the fire department aforesaid shall have authority to enter any building or premises and to examine the same and the contents thereof, and orally or in writing, to order the correction of any condition contemplated by Section Sixteen Hundred Thirty-three (1633), code, 1927. Should said order be not complied with the officer making the inspection shall report such inspection and the facts thereof to the state fire marshal who shall proceed as though the inspection had been made by himself."

"1242. *Use of Dangerous Fluids Forbidden.* It shall be unlawful for any person to establish or operate any dye works, pantorium, or cleaning works, in which gasoline, benzine, naphtha, or other explosive or dangerous fluids are used for the purpose of cleaning or renovating wearing apparel or other fabrics, in any building any part of which is used as a residence or lodging house.

"1243. *Punishment.* Any person convicted of violating the provisions of the foregoing section shall be fined in a sum not exceeding fifty nor less than ten dollars.

STRUCTURES IN WHICH THE MOST DISASTROUS FIRES OCCURRED

	Fires	Loss
Dwellings—Farm	425	\$1,062,640
Town	2,669	1,049,025
Stores	354	1,204,763
Barns—Farm	242	763,367
Warehouses and storage	51	76,582
Factories	52	746,352
Houses, apartments	89	362,538
Elevators and seed houses	11	82,440
Chicken brooders and poultry houses	74	72,325
Garages—Private	202	73,191
Public	50	130,638
Hotels	42	222,461
Shops, various kinds	80	49,942
Churches	29	189,620
Restaurants	73	76,267

CAUSES SHOWING GREATEST LOSS BY FIRES

	Fires	Loss
Unknown	849	\$3,494,874
Sparks from flues	1,536	493,945
Defective flues	346	429,520
Defective and overheated heating plants	238	371,105
Adjoining	198	386,667
Lightning—not rodDED	76	142,662
Defective electric wiring	180	316,537
Combustion—hay	65	188,431
Incendiary	46	49,339
Combustion—rags and rubbish	96	113,431
Defective oil burners, domestic	29	13,229

LARGEST FIRES OCCURRING DURING 1929—LOSS \$50,000 OR OVER

Cedar Rapids—February	\$ 83,000
Des Moines—March	202,645
Des Moines—March	180,773
Des Moines—April	157,475
Burlington—June	245,000
Council Bluffs—August	54,500

DEATHS FROM FIRES IN IOWA

During 1929, there were 99 deaths reported as a direct result of fire. Of this number 36 were men, 24 were women and 39 were children.

The Registrar of Vital Statistics of the State Board of Health rendered very valuable assistance in compiling this list.

A COMPARISON OF THE LOSSES IN EIGHTEEN LARGEST CITIES IN IOWA IN 1928 AND 1929

	No.		No.	
	1928	1929	1928	1929
	Fires	Loss	Fires	Loss
Burlington	47	\$ 119,045	99	\$ 329,053
Cedar Rapids	141	93,961	163	207,478
Clinton	155	34,498	141	36,439
Council Bluffs	212	110,816	218	180,582
Davenport	224	101,874	225	123,797
Des Moines	612	498,557	589	780,288

Dubuque	114	28,593	110	58,546
Fort Madison	43	21,010	53	26,365
Fort Dodge	76	26,113	117	111,465
Iowa City	41	26,780	68	74,638
Keokuk	104	23,967	61	22,232
Marshalltown	83	168,209	93	30,571
Mason City	71	59,647	67	36,680
Muscatine	74	13,528	69	33,083
Oskaloosa	24	8,020	25	8,380
Ottumwa	109	41,910	136	64,588
Sioux City	443	59,167	445	76,376
Waterloo	159	61,468	186	81,871
Totals	2,732	\$1,497,163	2,865	\$2,282,432

FIREMAN'S SHORT COURSE

It is impossible to estimate the benefit which the municipalities of the State have derived from the improved methods of fire fighting, and greater zeal in the prevention of fires. This is due almost entirely to the whole-hearted cooperation of the organized firemen of the State, the State Fire Marshal's Office, and the Iowa State College, in conducting a short course for Fire Fighters. This Short Course has been given at Ames for the past five years.

Personally, I do not believe that the City Officials take this matter seriously enough, or realize the good work that the Iowa State College at Ames is doing in assisting, or educating firemen along the lines of fire fighting.

Every City Council in the State of Iowa should send at least one or two firemen to attend the Fireman's Short Course at Ames, each year.

The 1930 Fireman's Short Course will be held at the Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa, on May 20, 21, 22 and 23, 1930, and at least one alderman and as many firemen as possible should be sent to the School from each municipality.

IOWA STATE FIRE PREVENTION ASSOCIATION

We call your special attention to the good work of the Iowa State Fire Prevention Association in 1929.

As a result of the extensive program carried on by the Iowa State Fire Prevention Association, 12,774 people of the State of Iowa were reached in 1929, as compared with the 8,284 people addressed in 1928.

The following report will give you some idea of the work done in a few cities of the State of Iowa, and the Association has been equally as active in every other city and town in our State:

Town	No. Inspections	No. Defects	No. Recommendations	People Addressed
Red Oak	181	161	709	1,549
Villisca	96	88	431	720
Osage	119	111	448	855
Mason City	452	396	1,370	6,297
Grundy Center	89	81	457	725
Harlan	126	114	384	908
Oelwein	151	136	721	1,720
Totals	1,214	1,087	4,520	12,774

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION IN FIRE PREVENTION

To Teachers: No attempt has been made to divide the subject into specific lessons of uniform length. That is the work of the teacher. It is obvious that any of the items may be amplified by the knowledge and ability of the instructor.

As pupils respond most readily to objective teaching, a map of the city in which the school is located should be colored to show the brick, concrete and stone buildings and the wooden sections. Pupils should be encouraged to make personal inspection of hazardous districts and of desirable fire-resistive buildings, which might serve as barriers to spreading fires.

They should be taught how to send in a fire alarm, and how to operate a hand chemical extinguisher. Some member of the fire department should exhibit at one of the sessions the mechanism of a fire alarm box, and explain the principle and operation of the chemical extinguisher. Every pupil should know the location of the fire alarm box nearest his home and the telephone number of the fire department.

The causes of fires may be interestingly taught by suggesting to the pupil that fire reports be clipped regularly from the daily home paper, and that he classify the same as to avoidable and unavoidable fires. One or two Fire Prevention sessions per month in every school will be of great value in educating the pupils to act as fire-wardens in the protection of the home, school and city.

FIRE PREVENTION IN SCHOOLS AND ELSEWHERE

Fire drills should be held in each school at least twice each month. Pupils should not be permitted to stop for hats, books or other articles when the fire gong has sounded, but should be instructed to leave the building in a quiet, orderly manner: never sacrifice order for haste, panic is just as dangerous as fire. Teachers should be required to call the roll from the daily attendance list when the pupils have arrived at the designated safe position from the school; the fire alarm should be distinctive in character and

never used for any other purpose; the alarm should be identical in each school; the alarm should be examined each day. The purpose of the fire drill is two-fold; first to teach the child how to leave the school house in such an orderly manner as to avoid injuries that might occur due to haste, and to teach the pupils to be calm in the event of panics which may occur at any time in their after life. The drill is just as essential to the pupil's education as is grammar or arithmetic.

The following Section of the State Fire Marshal law, refers particularly to Fire drills in public schools:

Section 1651: *Fire Drills in Public Schools—Exits Unlocked.* It shall be the duty of the State Fire Marshal and his deputy to require teachers of public and private schools, in all buildings of more than one story, to have at least one fire drill each month, and to require all teachers of such schools, whether occupying buildings of one or more stories, to keep all doors and exits of their respective rooms and buildings unlocked during school hours.

The following is a letter addressed to the teachers and pupils of Iowa, by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Miss Agnes Samuelson:

To the Teachers and Pupils of Iowa:

Every person should know the causes and dangers of fire. But mere knowledge is not enough. This information should be translated into habits of carefulness in the prevention of fire losses. The story of the fire loss each year in our state and nation is a terrible tragedy; much valuable property and many precious lives are lost through fire—that indispensable friend or vicious enemy, depending upon its control. The principal cause of the tragedies is carelessness; therefore, the principal remedy is carefulness.

You have received material from the State Fire Marshal for use in observing Fire Prevention Week and in developing safety attitudes and habits of carefulness. Let the instruction in safety and fire prevention continue as a definite part of the citizenship lessons and in correlation with the other school subjects. The children can become a most significant factor in reducing the fire hazard by increasing their knowledge of the subject and their carefulness in learning to do the things which will better safeguard and conserve human life.

Yours very truly,

AGNES SAMUELSON,

Superintendent of Public Instruction.

FIRE PREVENTION BOOTH AT STATE FAIR

We again maintained a booth at the Iowa State Fair this year and distributed about 50,000 pieces of fire prevention literature. We met many school teachers who seemed anxious to take part in

Fire Prevention Week, and were anxious to get material along this line.

By the interest shown we feel that we have started something in the schools that will be educational and will later bear fruit along the line of fire prevention.

THE FIRE WASTE: CAUSES AND PREVENTION

Rubbish heaps are fire breeders. Fires start in them and are fed by them. A clean city will have few fires.

Attics and cellars should be kept free from combustible accumulations.

Lack of Cleanliness Ashes carelessly deposited in wooden boxes, against wooden fences or other combustible surfaces.

Burning trash or autumn leaves too near buildings.

Smoking The careless use of pipes, cigars and cigarettes causes countless fires. A lighted cigarette thrown through an open sidewalk grating is supposed to have caused the Baltimore conflagration.

Smoking in factories, mills, warehouses and shops, stables, garages, etc., should be absolutely prohibited.

Wooden boxes should never be used as cuspidors.

The match is designed to start fires, and it does. A single match may cause the burning of a city. Most fires are of the same size when they start.

Fires Start from Matches A thoughtful husband or father will have no matches in his home except those which light only on the box. Such matches, if accidentally dropped or secured by young children, cannot be ignited on any ordinary surface. Hundreds of baby children are burned to death every year, playing with the "strike anywhere" match.

No match which can accidentally ignite under foot, or be ignited by rats or mice, should be allowed in home, store or factory.

Lighting Devices Defective electric wiring. All wiring should be done by competent electricians only, and inspected before current is turned on. Electric light bulbs should never be covered by cloth or paper shades or decorations.

Exposed gas jets. Curtains and draperies may be blown against gas jets by draughts from open windows. Movable gas brackets, if used, should be guarded by stops, and the flames enclosed in wire cages.

Kerosene lamps should be scrupulously clean.

Private gasoline vapor or acetylene gas lighting plants should be frequently inspected and kept in strict conformance with safety requirements.

Candles or matches should never be taken into closets or other places where they may ignite flammable materials.

Heating Defective chimneys and flues. Public authorities should certify to the proper chimney construction of every house. Builders can easily cover up dishonest intent or criminal negligence in chimney building.

Neglected furnaces. Fires should never be relighted until the furnace is overhauled. Pipes rust during the summer and may deliver sparks to the cellar. Smoke pipes should be taken down in the spring as the passage of moist air through them rusts them rapidly.

Overheated stoves. Stoves often get red hot when filled with fuel and left with drafts open.

A stove is a receptacle for fire, and should not be neglected; adjacent woodwork and the floor under it should be protected. Clothes hung too close to dry are easily ignited.

An open fire-place should always be protected by a wire spark-screen. Many children are burned to death by their clothing igniting at open fires.

Gas and oil stoves should be kept scrupulously clean and free from leaks.

Electric flatirons should never be left with the current on.

ARRESTS AND PROSECUTIONS

BOONE COUNTY—An investigation was made of a fire that occurred July 26, 1929, in the dwelling owned by Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Harvey, at 1426 Carroll Street, Boone, Iowa.

Mr. West, the Fire Chief, informed us that he found a bundle of rags and card board soaked with kerosene, burning in the attic, and he also found a bundle of rags in a closet downstairs. There had also been kerosene thrown in different places.

We did not have sufficient evidence charging anyone with the crime of arson, but in sworn statements taken from Mr. and Mrs. Harvey, which were presented to the County Attorney, he signed a County Attorney's Information and Warrant was issued for Mrs. Harvey, charging her with perjury. The Grand Jury, however, returned a "No Bill" on the indictment.

DECATUR COUNTY—On May 10, 1929, fire was discovered by Lula Elmore of Pleasanton, about one o'clock, A. M.

Mrs. Elmore's son, Oren, a boy of about 17 years, was sentenced to the Boys' Training School at Eldora, Iowa, until he becomes twenty-one years of age, as a result of a confession made by him in connection with the case. Oren was later paroled to his brother, Olin Elmore, of Braddyville.

Wilbur Elmore was sentenced to five years in prison, and was paroled to Duffy Lorey, Deputy Sheriff.

Mrs. Elmore had left the place at noon the day before the fire, and sent the 17-year-old son to the home of Wilbur Elmore, across the Missouri line. The household goods had been removed from the place to the Wilbur Elmore home before the fire and the boys came to town about one o'clock A. M., and set the fire.

A barn had been burned on this same lot the year before.

Mrs. Elmore was about to lose this property by mortgage foreclosure. She carried \$800.00 insurance on the house, and \$400.00 on the contents.

Mrs. Elmore confessed to attempting to burn her home to collect the insurance and was sentenced to five years at Rockwell City.

DELAWARE COUNTY—On Saturday morning, August 31, 1929, at 4 o'clock, a house owned by Mrs. Anna Shafer, of Sand Springs, was burned to the ground.

This house was valued by the neighbors at about \$500.00, and carried \$1,500.00 insurance. Mrs. Shafer had been having considerable trouble with her neighbors, and wanted to leave town. She sent her husband and two small children to his brother's home on a visit, and set fire to the building by pouring kerosene over clothing and rags, and setting them on fire. Mrs. Shafer was arrested by a representative from this office and the deputy Sheriff, and taken to Manchester where she plead guilty to a County Attorney's Information and was sentenced to a term of five years in Rockwell City.

DELAWARE COUNTY—On Sunday, September 15, 1929, about 1:15 P. M., a house on the F. A. Bort farm, south of Hopkinton, occupied by Frank Martins, burned to the ground. Martins confessed to the setting of this fire, to a representative from this office and the Sheriff and Deputy Sheriff of Delaware County, to collect \$800.00 insurance on the household goods, and had succeeded in collecting \$700.00 on this policy.

Mr. Martins was taken to Manchester and plead guilty to a County Attorney's Information to defraud the insurance company, and was sentenced to five years at Fort Madison.

Mr. Martins was a World War Veteran. Had a wife and three small children. Was paroled to Sheriff H. C. Utley, and the fact that the family was in destitute circumstances, had much to do with the leniency in this case.

FAYETTE COUNTY—On October 22, 1929, an investigation was made on an attempt to commit arson, which occurred October 13, 1929, at 7-Second Avenue, Southeast, Oelwein, Iowa.

In our investigation we found sufficient evidence, and an Information was signed, charging Helen Rawlings with an attempt to commit arson. She waived preliminary hearing, and was bound over to the October term of Grand Jury, and an indictment was returned against her.

FREMONT COUNTY—An investigation was made of a fire that occurred on January 28, 1929, about 12:30 A. M., at Sidney, Iowa, and Mrs. Bertha Dutton, the occupant, was indicted, tried and acquitted.

HAMILTON COUNTY—On December 20, 1928, in the afternoon, a house on the Jesse Seger farm near Blairsburg, Iowa, was burned, and suspicion was directed to one Arley Alden, the tenant. In company with the Sheriff of Hamilton County, a representative of this office tried to locate Mr. Alden, but failed. On January 17, 1929, Mr. Alden was picked up by a representative of this office, while in Des Moines, and he confessed to setting this fire for the purpose of collecting the insurance. He was taken to Webster City, turned over to the Sheriff, and plead guilty to a County Attorney's Information on a charge of burning the building to defraud an insurance company, and was sentenced for one to five years at Anamosa.

JASPER COUNTY—An investigation was made of a fire that occurred February 4, 1929, at 5 o'clock, A. M., at Colfax, Iowa, and Henry Link, the owner and occupant, was indicted, tried and acquitted.

Mr. Link left the County without collecting the insurance.

KEOKUK COUNTY—On July 16, 1929, an investigation was made of a fire which occurred on February 26, 1929, on a farm in Warren Township, owned by Robert Taylor and occupied by Harry Lathrop. Lathrop was arrested and waived to the Grand Jury, and was released on bond. At the time of the arrest we felt we had sufficient evidence for a conviction, but when the case was presented to the Grand Jury we were unable to present the evidence of our principal witness.

LINN COUNTY—On March 13, 1929, an investigation was made of a fire which occurred about 7:30 A. M., partially destroying a house and some old furniture located at 942 Fifteenth Avenue, Southeast, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The house was owned by John Mentzer, and was supposed to have been occupied by Frank E. Smith.

Mr. Smith claims that he and one John E. Waterbury roomed together at the Grand Hotel. Waterbury told him he had made some easy money out of a fire which occurred in the Auditorium some time prior, and that they could do it again. Waterbury went with him to rent the house, furnished the furniture, helped haul it to the place, paid for insurance, and sent a can of kerosene oil out to the place.

Mr. Smith confessed to setting fire to the property and plead guilty to a County Attorney's Information, and was sentenced to Fort Madison penitentiary.

Waterbury was indicted by the Grand Jury and was tried at the September term of Court, and acquitted by a sympathetic jury.

LINN COUNTY—On August 3, 1929, about 10:30 P. M., about four miles west of Cedar Rapids, on Highway No. 30, a garage on the Stanley Luback farm was burned.

Suspicion was directed to one Carl Rothenucher, a seventeen-year-old boy, who had worked for Mr. Luback as a farm hand, earlier in the season, but had not been employed for some time. The boy confessed to having run out of gasoline on the road, went to this garage, got a five-gallon can and was drawing gas from a barrel into the can; lighted a match to see if the can was full, and set fire to the garage which burned with considerable loss.

This evidence was turned over to the County Attorney and at this time has not been acted upon.

LINN COUNTY—On the night of August 27, 1929, a straw stack was burned on the Bill Coolahan farm in Clinton Township, Linn County, Iowa.

Suspicion was directed to a hired man who had been discharged by Coolahan, known as G. D. (or General) Filling. Mr. Filling had served a term of five years at Fort Madison, and was released November 28, 1928. After batching for a time, Mr. Filling took a housekeeper without the formality of a marriage ceremony. Mr. Coolahan discharged him, and a few days later Mr. Filling was married and he and his wife drove out to the Coolahan farm and burned the straw stack. They plead guilty to a County Attorney's Information on a charge of burning the property of another, and were sentenced, the husband to three years at Fort Madison, and the wife to three years at Rockwell City, as an accomplice.

MAHASKA COUNTY—On or about the first of May, a complaint was made to this office of a fire which occurred on the night of April 18, on the Jim Burrier farm, southeast of Oskaloosa, Iowa, in which Paul and Scott Williams made affidavit that they saw Wes Randell leave the scene of the fire, run across the field to a car in waiting and leave the premises. Evidence was submitted to the Grand Jury who failed to indict.

MARSHALL COUNTY—On February 2, 1929, about 11:30 P. M., a farm dwelling owned by D. B. Bryant, occupied by E. C. Edwards, located in Bangor Township, was burned. Mr. Edwards took his wife and four children to her brother's home about a mile and a half from the scene, and upon his return found the building falling in.

Edwards had been making arrangements to go to Missouri, March 1st, and on January 29, he had \$800.00 insurance written on his household goods for a period of five years in the Marshall County Mutual Insurance Company.

Mr. Edwards was arrested, taken to Marshalltown, held in the County Jail—later released upon petition of neighbors and residents of the Community,—surrendered his insurance policy and left the state.

POLK COUNTY—An investigation was made of a fire that occurred in Des Moines, August 6, 1928, in the Warren Grocery. Ward Dawson, an ex-convict, was indicted, tried and is now serving five years at Fort Madison.

SCOTT COUNTY—An investigation was made of a fire that occurred October 27, 1929, at Davenport, Iowa. Mrs. Ida Moss, the tenant, and Mrs. Josie D. Rudy, a roomer, were arrested and the Grand Jury indicted both of them on a charge of conspiracy to defraud. They are now awaiting trial.

WAPELLO COUNTY—On Friday, October 4, 1929, about two o'clock A. M., a barn on the Charles Mast farm, located north of Rutledge station, in Center Township, was discovered on fire. Upon investigation we learned that one John Flemming, whose home was at Osceola, Iowa, got off of a Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul freight train at Rutledge, and apparently was under the influence of liquor. At least, he came out of the barn after it was partially burned and told the people that came to the fire that he had burned it, and that he was being chased by men who were shooting him with poisoned arrows, and other hallucinations. He was taken to Ottumwa, turned over to the Sheriff, was adjudged insane and sent to the hospital at Mt. Pleasant.

The records and his admission showed that he had been an inmate of the institutions at Independence and Clarinda for inebriety, and after being at the hospital at Mt. Pleasant for a few days, he straightened up and admitted that he was under the influence of liquor at the time.

Mr. Flemming was surrendered to representatives of this office and returned to Ottumwa where he plead guilty to a County Attorney's information and was sentenced to a term at Fort Madison.

WINNEBAGO COUNTY—On August 16, 1929, an investigation was made of a fire which occurred July 29, 1928, in a tire shop at Lake Mills, Winnebago County, Iowa.

K. K. Rusley was owner of the tire shop and confessed to having set the place on fire to collect insurance.

Mr. Rusley plead guilty and was sentenced to five years at Anamosa.

WOODBURY COUNTY—On November 18, 1928, a fire occurred at Sioux City, and after the investigation the owner and tenant, Tom Burdine, was indicted, tried and acquitted.

TABLE NO. I

Showing the total number of fires reported by Counties. Cities of more than 10,000 are set out separately. Damage to buildings and contents is combined.

Counties and Cities of 10,000 and Over	No. of Fires	Loss
Adair	9	\$ 22,460
Adams	17	18,700
Allamakee	8	14,014
Appanoose	60	108,667
Audubon	13	14,277
Benton	35	26,249
Black Hawk—Waterloo	186	81,871
Balance Black Hawk County	28	56,304
Boone	61	44,110
Bremer	12	28,947
Buchanan	26	47,820

Buena Vista	23	37,807
Butler	18	73,184
Calhoun	22	170,045
Carroll	35	17,459
Cass	41	82,453
Cedar	29	28,419
Cerro Gordo—Mason City	67	36,680
Balance Cerro Gordo County	27	43,383
Cherokee	24	14,532
Chickasaw	12	13,105
Clarke	24	38,798
Clay	25	38,640
Clayton	27	53,639
Clinton—Clinton	141	36,439
Balance—Clinton County	23	44,838
Crawford	40	65,028
Dallas	24	52,637
Davis	13	37,835
Decatur	43	73,035
Delaware	25	66,160
Des Moines—Burlington	99	329,053
Balance—Des Moines County	14	47,049
Dickinson	19	22,060
Dubuque—Dubuque	110	58,546
Balance—Dubuque County	26	72,202
Emmet	9	8,635
Fayette	53	86,823
Floyd	20	16,629
Franklin	20	13,549
Fremont	29	49,885
Greene	28	34,749
Grundy	23	27,347
Guthrie	23	45,213
Hamilton	16	8,352
Hancock	15	27,175
Hardin	57	66,812
Harrison	33	57,914
Henry	13	38,993
Howard	16	53,759
Humboldt	6	27,022
Ida	14	16,890
Iowa	18	33,557
Jackson	22	17,465
Jasper	36	33,603
Jefferson	38	24,059
Johnson—Iowa City	68	74,638
Balance—Johnson County	18	39,981
Jones	37	62,303
Keokuk	24	55,806
Kossuth	22	19,009
Lee—Fort Madison	53	26,365
Keokuk	61	22,232
Balance—Lee County	12	61,683
Linn—Cedar Rapids	163	207,478
Balance—Linn County	29	67,284
Louisa	12	55,005
Lucas	14	26,314
Lyon	25	33,192
Madison	23	31,023
Mahaska—Oskaloosa	25	8,380
Balance—Mahaska County	18	51,240
Marion	34	49,825

Marshall—Marshalltown	93	30,571
Balance—Marshall County	9	30,941
Mills	26	93,163
Mitchell	31	91,032
Monona	28	62,325
Monroe	41	154,123
Montgomery	59	108,189
Muscatine—Muscatine	69	33,083
Balance—Muscatine County	26	49,774
O'Brien	33	33,093
Osceola	14	12,179
Page	60	104,693
Palo Alto	14	10,630
Plymouth	19	31,260
Pocahontas	13	59,268
Polk—Des Moines	589	780,288
Balance—Polk County	30	33,720
Pottawattamie—Council Bluffs	218	180,582
Balance—Pottawattamie County	16	34,229
Poweshiek	42	58,078
Ringgold	8	9,603
Scott—Davenport	225	123,797
Balance—Scott County	14	23,990
Sac	21	20,576
Shelby	24	28,739
Sioux	17	31,110
Story	76	40,867
Tama	29	80,002
Taylor	21	26,260
Union	29	23,235
Van Buren	11	22,238
Wapello-Ottumwa	136	64,588
Balance—Wapello County	25	56,542
Warren	26	60,645
Washington	9	54,031
Wayne	21	35,832
Webster—Fort Dodge	117	111,465
Balance—Webster County	18	50,035
Winnebago	11	20,688
Winneshiek	28	37,765
Woodbury—Sioux City	445	76,376
Balance—Woodbury County	26	36,034
Worth	9	13,097
Wright	20	140,603
Total	5,339	\$ 6,776,473

TABLE NO. II

Showing the kind of property destroyed. Damage to buildings and contents set out separately.

	No. of Fires	Damage to Buildings	Damage to Contents
Auto tops and tire shops	6	\$ 2,924	\$ 8,223
Autos and trucks	310	24,314	1,150
Bakeries	20	6,952	3,446
Banks	15	4,675	2,275
Barns—Farms	242	534,578	228,789
Town	64	30,954	12,940
Battery stations	5	1,012	890
Railway box cars, etc.	18	24,737	6,055
Chicken brooders and poultry houses	74	28,693	43,632
Churches	29	168,243	21,377

Cleaning and dyeing	37	6,849	7,526
Corn cribs and granaries	9	9,906	8,631
Dance halls	5	34,026	7,616
Depots and freight houses	6	3,608	800
Dwellings—Farm	425	816,965	245,675
Town	2,669	753,665	295,360
Elevators and seed houses	11	41,415	41,025
Engine and boiler rooms	3	218	80
Factories, various kinds	52	246,380	499,972
Filling stations and oil storage	23	10,184	10,271
Foundries	2	1,052	200
Funeral homes	2	200	150
Garages—private	203	31,016	42,175
Public	50	53,469	77,169
Hog houses	3	1,135	700
Hospitals	4	4,505	810
Hotels	42	178,469	43,992
Heuses, apartments	89	110,138	39,400
Ice houses	1	300	200
Junk yards	11	6,230	6,950
Laundries	4	14,538	40,341
Lodge halls	4	4,951	72
Lumber yards	6	12,638	34,750
Mills, feed, flour, planing, etc.	3	1,690	6,300
Old Peoples' Homes	2	30,035	527
Office and office buildings	57	20,046	14,681
Packing plants and stock yards	4	20,475	10,565
Pool halls	10	15,281	12,515
Post offices	2	2,075	6,776
Printing plants	10	1,891	5,336
Restaurants	73	35,977	40,290
Schools	44	75,620	12,418
Sheds—coal and wood	66	17,002	6,650
Machine	15	3,843	6,260
Shops, various kinds	80	19,290	30,652
Stores	354	394,900	909,863
Summer kitchens	11	1,920	2,715
Theatres	29	25,793	43,982
Warehouses and storage	51	38,633	37,949
Miscellaneous	84	30,734	12,213
Total	5,339	\$ 3,884,144	\$ 2,892,329
			3,884,144
			\$6,776,473

TABLE NO. III

Containing a summary of the origin of the various fires reported, the number of each, and the total damage to the buildings and contents for the year 1928.

Causes	No. of Fires	Loss
Adjoining	198	\$ 386,667
Ashes and coals against wood	67	60,470
Automobile	83	16,029
Blow and oil torches	30	8,411
Bonfires and rubbish	96	67,828
Brooder lamps and stoves	36	19,142
Candle, lamp and lantern carelessness	24	25,830
Children playing with matches	88	28,990
Cleaning with gasoline	16	18,468
Clothing and bedding near stoves and pipes	26	7,846
Curtains blowing into flames	7	2,585
Defective auto wiring	144	46,906

Defective electric wiring.....	180	316,537
Defective electric appliances.....	46	20,687
Defective fireplaces.....	35	5,646
Defective flues.....	346	429,520
Defective and overheated heating plants.....	238	371,195
Defective oil burners (Domestic).....	29	13,229
Defective oil and gasoline stoves.....	146	222,111
Defective pipes to stoves.....	95	24,878
Electric iron with current left on.....	40	11,919
Films.....	16	13,812
Fireworks.....	15	2,245
Friction.....	5	716
Fumigation.....	8	3,918
Gasoline carelessness.....	44	23,100
Gasoline and volatile oil explosion.....	76	56,705
Grease, paint, tar, boiling over.....	41	21,361
Incendiary.....	46	49,339
Lightning—not rodde.....	76	142,662
Rodde.....	0	0
Lightning running in on radio wires.....	1	375
Match carelessness.....	75	27,692
Smokers' carelessness.....	238	144,506
Smoking meat.....	3	951
Sparks from engine and locomotives.....	22	12,985
Sparks from flues on wooden shingles.....	1,536	493,945
Spontaneous combustion:		
Coal, dust, etc.....	9	12,176
Hay and straw.....	65	188,431
Rags and rubbish.....	97	113,431
Shavings and sawdust.....	0	0
Sugar.....	0	0
Static electricity.....	11	3,677
Thawing water pipes.....	41	24,189
Unknown.....	\$49	3,261,874
Using gasoline and kerosene to start fires.....	4	6,800
Miscellaneous.....	101	66,779
Total.....	5,339	\$ 6,776,473

CONCLUSION

I desire to acknowledge the hearty cooperation and support accorded this office by Chiefs of Fire Departments, Mayors, Sheriffs, County Attorneys, and all others with whom we have come into official relationship.

In my conduct of the office I have aimed to make it one of broad, social and economic service. To this service, my best endeavors have been dedicated.

I have been and am thoroughly devoted to the idea of the conservation of our resources.

My appeal to the citizenship of Iowa is that they conserve from destruction by fire by exercising more care, and by placing greater safeguards about their property.

Respectfully submitted,

JOHN W. STROHM,
State Fire Marshal.

State of Iowa

1931

TWENTIETH ANNUAL REPORT

STATE FIRE MARSHAL

FOR THE YEAR 1930

JOHN W. STROHM

State Fire Marshal