

FOR BOSTON'S FIRE ENGINES

Building for Upkeep of Apparatus.

School for Engineers Is Also Located There.

Supt Byington Expert in His Line.

The recently completed building at the corner of Bristol and Dover sts, which is to be the headquarters of the repair and construction division of the Boston Fire Department, is the nearest to being absolutely fireproof of any building in Boston.

The four floors are occupied by the different departments of the repair division. The street floor is partly occupied by the blacksmith's department under the care of the master smith, John Connell; and the rest of this space is taken up by the powerful engines of the shop, and by the apparatus that comes for repair.



DISTRICT CHIEF EUGENE M. BYINGTON

Every facility is afforded the rapid handling of apparatus in case of breakdowns. Without leaving this floor an engine can be attached to a hydrant, the fire lighted, and the engine set to work exactly as it would be at a fire, so that after an engine is repaired it can immediately be tested under service conditions.

The electric apparatus elevator is one of the most powerful in Boston, and can easily lift the heaviest engines in service to any desired point.

The second floor is occupied by the machinery of the wood and metal workers and by the quarters of the superintendent. The third floor is the department supply store room.

The upper floor is occupied by the painters and by the leather harness and hose workers under Thomas F. Turner and Lieut Christopher F. Curran respectively. The department life rafts are made by William J. Dower, who also attends to all rope work. Supt of Construction and Repair Eugene M. Byington has charge of this division and of all the machinery of the department, including that of the fire boats. As an expert on the steam fire engine he has few equals, and engines built or altered to his specifications have produced remarkably successful results. Supt Byington has been a permanent member of the department, since November, 1873, but belonged to the fire force long before that, for his record shows that he served through the great Boston fire of 1872 as a substitute on Hcse 4. He is a born mechanic and has been working about and interested in engines all his life. As early as 1874 he was running a steam automobile in the streets of Boston until some one resuscitated an obsolete law which forbade steam propelled car-



LIEUT MARTIN A. KENEALY

riages to be driven through the streets, and compelled him to dispose of a machine that was too far in advance of the times.

Supervisor of Engines Must Keep Cool at All Times.

No matter how exciting the surroundings may be the supervisor is working in his quiet and unobtrusive way, keeping control of engines, covering perhaps a square mile or more, seeing to everything as it arises, and trying to forestall possibilities that would be irremediable should they actually occur.

In this work Supt Byington is ably assisted by engine Vincent B. Buckley, who acts as his aid, and is always on duty with him at headquarters when not attending fires. Engineer Buckley is the department sanitary engineer, and he is responsible for the plumbing, heating and ventilating arrangements of the department houses. He has been a member of the department since Dec 8, 1899, and was promoted engineer May 18, 1891.

The repair division is one of the most important of the Fire Department. When it devolves the maintenance in a first-class running order of all the apparatus of the department, and the task of keeping this apparatus at a high mark is by no means an easy one, for the working conditions are exacting, and accidents are not unusual.

In addition to general repair work on the apparatus and about the department houses, the receipt and distribution of supplies devolves upon this division, as does the testing of all hose and of new appliances and apparatus received by the department. Almost all of the old apparatus is rebuilt when necessary at the department shop, and quite a lot of apparatus is entirely constructed there.

Connected with this division are two schools for training firemen, one in the operation and repair of motor vehicles; the other in the operation and care of the steam fire engine.

The "engine school" is absolutely unique in this part of the country, and it is extremely doubtful that steam fire engineers receive so thorough and practical a training in any other city in the world as those of Boston do at the Fire Department engine school under the tuition of Supt Byington.

No matter how capable an engineer may be about other engines, the management of the steam fire engine will baffle him until its mysteries have been explained to him and he has had practical experience in its handling under working conditions, so every man, whether or no he holds an engineer's license, who takes up this branch of the service, must take his course in the department school. No more conscient-

tious teacher could be found than Supt Byington.

The men supplement the course at the school by studying the principles of steam engineering during their spare time, and by picking up what knowledge they can about the management of the different hydrants.

The course is one of the most interesting and profitable that a fireman can take. So great have been the demands upon the time of Supt Byington of late that he has been greatly helped in his instruction of the classes by Capt Harry M. Hebard.

Motor Engines Under Care of an Expert.

The advent of the motor engine into the Fire Department gave Supt Byington much food for thought, but with the versatility of a thorough mechanic he rapidly mastered this study, and is a firm believer in the efficiency of the motor engine under fire service conditions.

The department automobiles are all repaired at the department shop, though the care of the motor cars devolves upon the department expert, Lieut Martin A. Kenealy, who is also the instructor of the chauffeur school.

Lieut Martin A. Kenealy was formerly a clerk, and entered the Fire Department Jan 7, 1898. After service with Engines 7, 11, 14, 26 and 29, he was promoted lieutenant Jan 4, 1907.

April 9, 1909, he was made department drill master, and was assigned to the charge of auto chemical 15, Sept 16, 1910.

July 14, 1911, Commissioner Daly called him to headquarters to act as his aid.

He has given much of his time to study, and to such purpose that a few years ago he successfully passed the examinations for the Massachusetts bar, and though he never practices, is a full-fledged lawyer.

He prefers the fire service, and quickly realizing the possibilities of the motor engine, at once took up the study, spent some time at an auto factory, and is now an expert in this line of work.