

# "SALTING" FIREMEN MUST WEAR BADGES

## Zealous Guard Arrests One as German Spy

### Department Chiefs Issued Order to Avoid Future Mistakes

The mystery of why the members of the Boston Fire Department who are on "salting" detail wear their corporation or official badges on their coats has been solved.

When the general order was read to the department a short time ago considerable speculation as to why it had been sent out followed, and numbers of the men had an idea that they were being imposed on; but orders are orders, and when the next detail left, the different engine houses every man was decorated according to orders.

In the olden days, when horses were used for transporting the big pumping engines and trucks through the streets, a man who was given the assignment to "salt hydrants" hooked up one of the spare horses in a pung and, with a load of salt, started for a "joy ride."

Now when this order is issued the man assigned tells what he thinks of the job under his breath, packs his little canvas bag full of salt, lifts it onto his shoulder and starts on his rounds.

A short time ago Thomas F. Wren, a hoseman attached to Engine 25, Fort Hill sq, received the assignment and started on his rounds of the business district and the water front.

The job was not new to Wren as he has been on-it for a number of years and is one of the men who can pick out a surface hydrant blindfolded. For that reason it was not so bad as it would be to a new man, who would be forced to dig all over the street before he could locate the hydrant, even with the location sign for a guide.

On practically all the big wharves on the waterfront, hydrants are set for the Fire Department. It was while Wren was at work on one of these that all the trouble started which ended with the sending out of the order to wear the badges.

Wren walked down the wharf as he had done for many years. Just as he located his hydrant, and started to clean it before putting on the salt, he was suddenly brought to his feet by the point of a bayonet sticking in his ribs and the cry, "I got you now, you Hun!"

Turning around he looked into the end of a rifle in the hands of a soldier, who told him that if he moved he would fill him full of steel. Wren started to explain that he was a fireman on duty, but his explanations did not go with the soldier and with the bayonet still kept within a few inches of his ribs, he was marched to the headquarters of the soldiers who are guarding the water front.

Here he was kept under guard for over an hour, while the officers in charge of the guard telephoned to the Fire Department and about every other place in the city where they thought they could get information. It was not until an identification detail was sent to look Wren over that he was released.

To prevent any more arrests and to save patriotic firemen from being accused of being German spies, the order to wear the badges was issued. This story will be news to many men in the department and may help to quiet their injured feelings over the order.