

Russell Dyche

Mr. Russell Dyche not only shaped the future of London, Kentucky in the early 1900's but the future of the Kentucky Firefighters Association.

During his early 20's, Russell embarked in the newspaper industry as the owner and editor of the Sentinel Echo from 1907 through 1954. A popular figure on the streets of London, he was a forward thinker with a mission to make his city better and enhance the way of life for everyone who inhabited it.

When the idea of a City of London Fire Department arose, Russell Dyche was at the forefront. He helped start the department in 1922 and immediately became Fire Chief. He financed the London's first fire truck personally. Chief Dyche soon became active in the Kentucky Fireman's Association, which was in its infancy.

Starting the London Water Works a year prior to the fire department in 1921, Russell worked to provide water and the installation of fire hydrants throughout London. Obviously the fire department and water department worked hand in hand. Imagine today if the owner of the water works was the fire chief? Russell sold the water works to the city in 1947.

With London as a key player in the KFA through Chief Dyche's years, the KFA took off. At the annual conference of 1932 in Corbin, Chief Dyche was elected President of the KFA. He served three consecutive years holding conferences in Pikeville, Newport, and Georgetown.

Chief Dyche served on KFA committees and was instrumental in enhanced training for all firefighters of the state. At those earliest KFA conferences, training played a huge part in the agenda.

During Chief Dyche's 1934 KFA conference, the program book cover read "Official Program, Fifteenth Annual Convention and Fire College, Kentucky Firemen's Association, Newport, August 28,29,30, 1934. 3 – Day Events included: Registration, 50 cents; Business Session; Demonstrations by Cincinnati Life Squad; Parade; Demonstrations by Cincinnati Salvage Corps and Louisville Engine Company; Demonstrations by Cincinnati Engine and Ladder Company; Fireman's Ball; Business Session; Election of Officers and Grand Picnic.

Chief Dyche's London Fire Department is on record as the first to pay its \$1.00 dues to the KFA in 1928.

The Chief retired from active duty with the department in 1941 after a progressive 20 years. He was then named as Director of State Parks for the Commonwealth. Also in 1941, Mr. Dyche served as the President of the Kentucky Press Association.

Mr. Russell Dyche passed away on November 5, 1959.

A progressive man, who led the KFA in its early years, we are proud to posthumously honor Chief Russell Dyche tonight.

Presenting Chief Dyche's award will be KFA President Bill Robbins and accepting on behalf of the Dyche family will be Chief Dyche's great grandson, Mr. Tony Brown, presently a firefighter with the London Fire Department.

