

# £1000 Fire at St. Albans

## Building, Contents Totally Destroyed

### Two Fire Brigades But No Water

On Wednesday night the home of Mr Gordon Calder, at St. Albans, together with all its contents, was totally destroyed by fire. The cause of the outbreak is unknown.

The building was a six roomed dwelling, situated in Boundary Road about a quarter of a mile from the station.

It appears that Mr Calder was writing, when his sister-in-law, who had retired to bed, thought she heard something in one of the rooms and got up to investigate. She found the back portion of the house well alight.

The blaze was immediately attacked, but it was soon found that the task was an impossible one. An effort was then made to save some of the contents, but so quickly did the flames spread that the only articles secured before the flames prevented further work were a wardrobe, a couple of pictures and a quantity of bedding.

Some idea of Mr Calder's loss can be gained from the fact that included in the many valuable furnishings and conveniences were an electric refrigerator and a stove. It is estimated the total loss would be about £1000.

Prompt arrival of detachments from the Sunshine and Footscray fire stations gave some cause for hope. Hose lines were run out and connected with the pumps from two nearby dams, but unfortunately the obstructed air weather of the past

nearby dams, but unfortunately the protracted dry weather of the past weeks had accounted for most of the storage supply and only about two hundred gallons were able to be pumped and poured on the flames, making hardly any impression whatever. The firemen, although fully equipped with all the latest fire fighting appliances, could do nothing without the all-important water, and could only stand by and watch the house being eaten up by the flames. Hot weather conditions assisted in the intensity of the conflagration.

The dwelling and contents are partly covered by insurance.

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This serious happening seems to put the cap on the continued and ceaseless efforts by the people at St. Albans to obtain a water supply. The urgency of its need for domestic purposes was emphasised in these columns only last week, and now that destruction of property is a factor also the people of St. Albans should make the departmental machinery run hot in pressing for water. For weeks past a considerable number of householders have been obliged to cart water from Deer Park. At a township only 11

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miles from the city this is too bad.

Sunshine public men could do a lot in helping St. Albans to get water. This was demonstrated a month or so ago, when Messrs A. Lowe and J. Willan and Commis-

sioner E. C. Treloar, a newly elected member of the water trust, who is an "outsider," attended a Progress Association meeting and did their best to calm the ruffled waters made by two sections of the community who both think they are doing their best. One section thinks the other is interfering, and the other thinks the first is dilatory in its methods. Fortunately the differences are entirely—or almost entirely—public, so that the task of placating the

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so that the task of placating the "warring tribes" would not involve outsiders in personal disputes. One thing is certain: While these two factions continue the powers that be will sit back in departmental state and laugh and do nothing for them.

And in addition to uniting the St. Albans camp a "buying-in" of the Sunshine people will help to convince those in charge of water supply that the need is genuine and not a question to be filed for future reference.

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(To the Editor.)

Sir,—Eleven miles from Melbourne, three miles from a water main, there is a so-called suburb—St. Albans. For over 22 years (to my knowledge) the people have been agitating for water. Is water a necessity or a luxury? One would almost think the latter.

On Wednesday night a modern home, beautifully furnished and with all the conveniences that are possible in such an "outback" place, were destroyed by fire.

Firemen risked their lives in a vain endeavor to save a house which had become a raging inferno, the only water to aid them being from a neighbor's water tank. Result: Total loss to the owner, and the neighbor is left without sufficient water to carry on her normal duties. Even her dam was pumped dry.

Is the conscience of the council—which has supposed to be trying to

get water for all these years—  
pricking? The personnel of this  
council prides itself on the length of  
its sojourn at the council table.  
What is the result?—Yours, etc.,

**WHO'S THE NEXT VICTIM?**

St. Albans, 28/2/36.

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**NEWMARKET SELECTIONS ON  
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