

ASBESTOS CLOTHING DEVELOPMENT 1926 - 1946

(Being a chronological report on Asbestos Suits and other Safety Equipment, by the Technical Director of Bell's Asbestos & Engineering Limited, Slough, England.)

1926

Two men entered a large fire in light asbestos suits and helmets. They remained in the fire for 35 seconds. One of them lost a piece of the end of his nose when the helmet was removed; it had stuck to the mica visor.

1927 - 1928

Minor further experiments completed. Fire fighting authorities and others do not seem very much interested.

1929 - 1931

Laboratory experiments continued in order to ascertain relationship between weight of equipment and its insulating value. Value of asbestos (not asbestos-cement) ceilings in houses proven.

1933

Series of practical experiments commenced in "fire tunnel" with fire temperature held at 1500° F. minimum—2000° F. maximum. Physical reactions of operators studied by medical experts.

1936

Nine volunteers continued experiments and two public demonstrations given. Air authorities showing real interest. Fire authorities also interested. One man remained in 1600° F. for 4 minutes. Experiments commenced on asbestos drop curtains as firestops.

1937

First experiment in rescue of pilot from aircraft burning in tray of petrol, successful. "Pilot" wore heavy asbestos suit. Rescuers (2) completed task in lighter suits in 25 seconds. Further experiments completed, in two of which men taking part were seriously burnt. One was experimenting with use of oxygen mask; the other was trying a "pilot rescue" in a very light suit.

Orders received for mobile asbestos cloth screens and drop curtains for isolating fires in large service lorry depots.

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Ice Fishing: Young angler makes a winter catch on frozen Lake Memphremagog.

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