

MAY 11, 1966

Personality Profile Of The Week

The worst fire in the recollection of Toronto Township's Fire Chief - - J. G. Braithwaite - - was the Belford conflagration in the early 40's, on what is now Cawthra Road.

The Chief recalls this fire mainly because of the number of lives lost in it. The veteran fire fighter has been Chief of the department since 1936.

He remembers the days when he and Bill Copland operated the only two-man fire department, with six extinguishers as their equipment. While fighting a fire in 1932 these extinguishers soon emptied. "If we had had one more extinguisher, we could have saved the house," commented the Chief.

But some good resulted, he recalled. His department bought a two-man used Bickle-Ford, cash on delivery, for \$600.

Another bad fire was the one at Malton Airport a few years ago. With gas spread over the tarmac, high winds, and danger to the planes, the firemen's job was made more difficult.

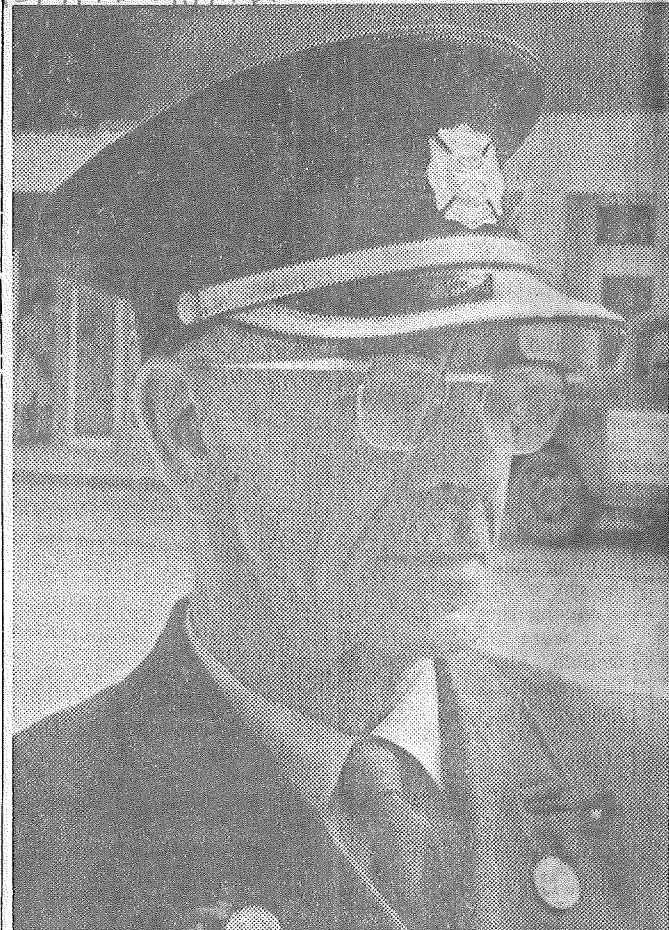
Kept Busy

The Chief recalled another incident - - Hurricane Hazel - - which kept his men busy for quite a while. In order to get to some fires the department purchased a boat. This was later stolen, hampering further work.

Chief Braithwaite explained that one of the department's perennial problems is grass fires. "While we're out fighting a grass fire, your home could be burning down." Many people seem to forget the by-law restricting the occurrence of private fires, he said.

The Chief feels strongly that every child should have a pet. He used to own four horses and 12 ponies, once winning a first and second ribbon at the C.N.E.

In April of 1964, the Ontar-



Fire Chief Braithwaite

to Humane Society presented two paintings to the Chief, and Captain Waterhouse for their heroic work in saving five horses from a local stable fire.

There are now five fire halls in Toronto Township, employing 70 full-time men and 35 volunteer workers. Equipment includes 10 pumpers and four station wagons.

Two of the station wagons contain the most recent resuscitation equipment. The men at the Hall are proud of their record of keeping damage and loss to a minimum.

Chief Braithwaite has lived in this area 38 years, and once owned and operated Cooksville Motors and the Cooksville Inn, then situated on the northern corner of Dundas and Centre Road.

During the 1950's the Chief was President of the Toronto Township Agricultural Society. He had to give up this post because of his increasingly busy schedule at the Fire Hall and garage. He has two grandsons and two great-grandsons. Over the years the Chief has received hundreds of letters of appreciation for the work he and his men have done.