In the 19th and early 20th centuries, large country houses and their estates were remote from organised fire brigades and in the event of fire had to rely on in-house resources. Most had a large number of staff and some even had their own hand-drawn pumping engines. Equipment ranged from fire buckets to permanent hydrant systems and may have included fire grenades and a variety of escape apparatus. Some of the very wealthy landowners even had their own private fire brigades.
Lanhydrock in Cornwall was gutted by a catastrophic kitchen-chimney fire in 1881: “Home Comfort,” Christina Hardymen, *National Trust*, 1992 (CIBSE Heritage Group Collection)
Merryweather hand-operated fire extinguisher

“Fire Engines and Fire-Fighting,” David Burgess-Wise, 1977
(CIBSE Heritage Group Collection)
Merryweather fire escape (Burgess-Wise)
Fire alarm catalogue of 1897 (Burgess-Wise)

Advertisement for the Harden Star Grenade Fire Extinguishing Company
A variety of fire grenades, typically filled with a solution of sodium bicarbonate, designed to be thrown into a fire and, upon the glass shattering, releasing carbon dioxide to (hopefully) smother the flames. Some later grenades were filled with carbon tetrachloride.
An electric extinguisher of 1898
(Not a good idea to spray near live electrical sockets!)
*La Nature*, 1898, p.96
John M Lecscale’s automatic fire escape of 1878 stored in a piece of furniture and wheeled to the window in the event of fire.

*Scientific American, 14, ix, 1878*
Advertisement (detail) for the Harris Portable Fire Escape
“Country Life in America,” June 1902