

1882

From the 30th annual report of the financial transactions of the Town of Winthrop for the year ending Feb. 18, 1882.

"We have been remarkably exempt from conflagrations the past year. Yet we are painfully aware that we have no adequate defense against fire. Should fire break out in thickly settled portions of the village or beaches, the results cannot fail to be disastrous. We earnestly recommend that all persons owning or occupying buildings should provide, by all possible means, against public, as well as private peril from such cause.

1883

31st Town Report

"We have been remarkably exempt from disasters by fire during the year. Not a single one of any consequence has occurred."

①

1884 Water Supply

②

During the ~~past~~ year a contract was made with the Revere Water Co. to lay 42,620' of pipes under Winthrop streets. On these pipes at strategic locations were placed forty hydrants for fire protection. The town agreed to pay for the use of these hydrants and the water needed for extinguishment of fires \$50.00 per annum per hydrant.

The water was obtained from artesian wells in Revere and the Cliftondale section of Saugus and pumped directly into the mains. Surplus was stored in a reservoir located on Prospect Hill in Revere. The pressure in Winthrop was sufficient to throw a stream over the highest house on Cottage Hill.

of water

1884

(3) (2)

The Bd. of S'men, feeling the necessity of having some responsible persons who could assume authority in case of fires, appointed three "fire Wards" who were, by statute, clothed with the necessary power. They could, at the fire scene, order any able bodied citizen to assist in the extinguishment of the fire. The new fire Wards were: Ephraim B. Floyd, John S. Townsbury and E. K. Townsbury.

On Fri. 5/2 after lengthy discussions at several town meetings, the town appropriated \$50.00 for the purchase of the first fire fighting equipment. Thirteen ladders were purchased from the Bishop & Bros. Co. for \$43.50. Four ladder hooks for \$4.00, and three Johnson pumps from the National Manuf. Co. for \$16.50. These pumps were hand operated from a fire bucket and delivered a very small but straight stream of water. E. B. Floyd spent \$59.44 for lumber and materials and labor for the construction of "ladder boxes". These boxes were actually *locks, which were placed at convenient locations throughout the town. *equipment W. Weston painted the boxes for \$17.50.

In order to render this equipment available for fire fighting, the formation of a volunteer fire dept. began.

During the year of 84 three buildings were consumed by fire and in two of these cases the cause was believed to be of incendiary origin (INCENDIARY). No clues to the guilty parties were ever obtained although rewards were offered for information by the owner of the property in one instance and one by the town.

On Wed. March 5, 84 the first fire of the year occurred at 5¹⁰P in a seven room two story dwelling on Wash. Ave. owned by Edwin S. Belcher. The house, occupied by Millard Smith and his mother, had a defective chimney which caused ~~a~~ fire to break out in the walls on the first floor. The blaze rapidly spread upward as neighbors attempted to remove the

1884

(4) (8)

furnishings. Due to many new construction projects in the neighborhood, a number of ladders were around and Herbert Tewksbury did some excellent fire fighting with his Johnson pump. As no other help arrived Mr. Tewksbury lost his battle and the fire burst through the roof ~~showing~~ the area with sparks. and a strong s/w wind. A roof fire broke out in the home of Sylvanus Payne but was quickly knocked down. Luckily, ~~the~~ ^{the} houses were partially covered with snow.

The second fire of the year was presumed to have been set and disturbed officials, but did only minor damage. On Wed. Oct. 22, 84 residents of St. Head ~~were~~ were awakened by cries of "fire" a few minutes after 11⁰⁰p. Fire Ward E. K. Tewksbury, a resident of St. Head, arrived quickly ^{and saw} a large body of flame ~~was~~ pouring out of the windows of Charles Sibley's house on the south west side of the hill. After a long wait a bucket brigade was formed but had little effect. The water was passed ^{at} considerable distance from the house owned by Mr. Osborne. The Sibley house burned to the ground as flames driven by a stiff s/west wind sent sparks flying. The brigade shifted their efforts towards getting down other structures.

This fire was of incendiary origin as the owner received an anonymous letter a few days earlier stating that unless the dwelling was removed the torch would be applied. As a result of this fire the selectmen posted a \$250.00 reward. During the first week in Nov. Mr. Osborne and residents of St. Head, threw a feast for Mr. Tewksbury and his "fire laddies" to show their gratitude,

Deciding that Bucket Brigades were not the answer to the existing fire extinguishment problem, the Town made a fairly liberal appropriation ~~of~~ of \$1,980.00 ~~or more~~ for the purchase of apparatus and related equipment. Late in Jan. 85 Capt. Swann and fire Ward Tewksbury set out to locate hose carriages in the greater Boston area, but were unsuccessful. The ones they had seen were too heavy to be hand-drawn. Mr. Tewksbury had heard that several carriages were stored on Deer Island but ice in Shirley Gut prevented his investigation.

One manufacturer, Asa Jackson of Boston, offered to supply the Town's needs. Four of Jackson's two wheel-
ed hand-drawn hose reels were purchased for \$326.48. The reels were capable of carrying up to 250' of 2½" fire hose and had tool boxes on the rear for holding nozzles, axes and related equipment.

Two thousand feet of 2½" rubber lined cotton jacket hose, six nozzles and a number of fire buckets were also purchased from the Boston Belting Co.

The "Chelsea Telegraph and Pioneer" in their first issue of Feb. 85 states: "Now that Revere has provided local fire apparatus, the Winthrop folks have been aroused to the necessity of making a similar provision. Judicious enterprise is always rewarded."

The four new hose reels arrived during the first week in March and were quickly placed in service. Two reels were quartered in the rear of Richardson's store at Post Office Square. These reels were moved to the rear of the Town Hall late in April. The remaining two reels were quartered somewhere at Great Head. Although no record of actual location can be found, a likely spot would seem to be on the property owned by fire Ward Tewksbury ^{at his home on Charles St.} or ^{at his shop on Beacon St.}

On Wed. 3/11/85 a practice run from the engine house to Payne's? ~~Payne's~~? corner (now **Pleas, Win, Wash.**) took place. The crew laid a line, hooked up to a hydrant and threw a stream of water on the Tannery. The entire run and hose drill took exactly seven minutes. One fireman stated: "This is a good first

record and we have some doubt if it will ever be beaten."

As more and more volunteers took interest in the department, three of the hose companies were organized as follows: The F. L. WOODWARD HOSE Co. No. 1 of Great Head formed 2-9-85, the GENERAL BARTLETT HOSE Co. No. 2 of Columbia Square (now Metcalf Sq.) formed 2-28-85. ~~On Dec. 4, 1885~~ On Dec. 4, 1885 the GEORGE B. EMERSON HOSE Co. No. 3 was formed by taking ten men from the company of HOSE 2 ~~and this hose #3 was quartered~~

It was quite an honor socially in these early days to be a fireman and volunteers applied for membership directly to the Hose Co. of their choice. Any citizen could become an Honorary member for \$1.00 per year.

Each company met weekly, drafted their own rules and by laws and held company elections every March. Elected officers were foreman who was the officer in charge, Clerk, treasurer and steward who had charge of all apparatus and equipment. Appointed annually by the officers were leading hosemen and hydrant men. The average number of men per company at this time was sixteen.

Rules pertaining to attendance of meetings were strictly enforced as records show an absent member was fined ten cents. Habitual absentees were shamefully dismissed from the company.

The By Laws of the Gen. Bartlett Hose Co. No. 2 were drafted by John McNaught, Millard C. Smith and David Thomas on Feb. 28, 85. Two articles are as follows: Art. #4 - Any member of this company who may be seen in public disguised in liquor or acting in a manner which may tend to bring discredit to the company while at a fire or on drill or parade shall be discharged by a two thirds vote of the members present. Art. #5 - Any member who shall become disguised in liquor or behave

FIRE DEPARTMENT.

FIRE WARDS.

E. K. TEWKSBURY. J. M. TUCKER. CHAS. R. FORD.

The following is a list of names of the officers and members of
F. L. WOODWARD HOSE CO., No. 1.

H. C. Hamilton, Foreman.	C. H. Harris.
J. A. Packard, Ass.	L. W. Paul.
W. A. Walton, Sec.	G. C. Moore.
G. A. Barrett, Treas.	S. A. Rogers.
W. E. Wyman.	A. L. Belcher.
W. A. Rogers.	A. E. Wyman.
C. H. Smith.	A. G. Wyman.
J. F. Dodge.	G. W. Paul.
Alex. Smith.	W. N. Flanagan.

GENERAL BARTLETT HOSE CO., No. 2.

B. T. Floyd, Foreman.	C. A. Belcher.
C. E. Ingalls, Clerk.	C. J. Belcher.
Wm. Morgan Stewart.	A. M. Belcher.
John McNaught.	Henry Belcher.
M. F. Smith.	A. L. Sawyer.
John Kennedy.	W. A. Floyd.
A. W. Robinshaw.	J. A. Flanagan.

GEO. B. EMERSON HOSE CO., No. 3.

J. B. Tewksbury, Foreman.	F. L. Whittemore.
F. A. Whittemore, Clerk.	J. H. Cruise.
John Knowles, Steward.	L. M. Lause.
E. S. Tewksbury.	T. Mahoney.
G. M. Douglass.	W. S. Burrill.
J. W. Davis.	Ellsworth Burrill.
R. W. Patch.	J. Martin.
C. P. Tewksbury.	

ve made a careful
men, Treasurer,
of Winthrop, and
differences in the
By personal in-
of the Treasurer,
the accounts of
mal inspection of
l fund, and we do
atv. d amount
ant in the hands
rs is \$4,698.52.

WHITE.
BURRILL.

Auditors.

1885

disorderly, curse, swear or use any indecent language or insist on making political speeches during the meeting hours shall be expelled by vote of the company.

Two new fire Wards were appointed during 1885; J. M. Tucker and Charles R. Ford. They soon realized a need for more specialized wheeled ~~equipment~~ apparatus, so late in the year a contract was awarded to Mr. Tucker to construct two hand-drawn four-wheeled hook and ladder trucks. These trucks were built in his Winthrop barn at a cost of \$200.00 each and were delivered early in 1886.

As there was a desperate need for suitable quarters for the apparatus, the April Town Meeting made an appropriation of \$1,000.- which was used for the construction of Winthrop's first fire house. This building, dedicated on Thursday, Nov 12, 1886 was known as the Pauline St. Hose House and stood diagonally across the street from the present Central fire station.

Recommendations for a second hose house for the beach section of town were presented to the Town Meeting and a study committee was formed.

In March of 85 a hose carriage was purchased by the city of Revere and was organized as the "John C. Barrett Hose Co. No. 2". It was quartered in the stable owned by Mr. Barrett on Winthrop Ave., Beachmont. The hose wagon was built by the American Hose Manufacturing Co. of Chelsea and was seen at many Winthrop fires for years to come.

1885 85

9

- ~~3 Small Snow Blows.~~
- ~~1 Tool Box.~~
- ~~18 Shovels.~~
- ~~5 Picks.~~
- ~~3 Ropes.~~
- ~~2 Stone Hammers.~~
- ~~1 Large Broom.~~
- ~~1 Branding Iron.~~
- ~~1 Lanterns.~~
- ~~1 Oil Can.~~

- 4 Ladder Boxes.
- 60 Badges.
- 2,000 Feet Hose H
- 240 Feet 2 1-2 Inch 1
- 5 Scrub Brushes.
- 1 Stove Brush.
- 1 Dust Brush.
- 1 Oil Can.
- 120 Feet 2 1-2 Incl
- 4 Ladder Dogs.

FIRE DEPARTMENT.

- 4 Hose Carriages.
- 2,000 Feet Jacket Hose.
- 6 Butts and 6 Nozzles.
- 40 Spanners.
- 8 Spanner Belts.
- 3 Lanterns.
- 4 Iron Bars.
- 4 Hydrant Gates.
- 24 Hose Lines.
- 8 Hydrant Wrenches.
- 23 Fire Bucket.
- 3 Johnson Pumps.
- 3 18 Foot Ladders with Hooks.
- 3 25 Foot Ladders.
- 3 30 Foot Ladders.
- 1 35 Foot Ladders.
- 8 Fire Hooks.
- 8 Pikes.
- 4 Fire Axes.
- 8 Common Axes.

- 1 Safe in Selectmer
- 1 Safe for Town Cl
- Law Library.
- Duplicate Set of
- 2 Steel Stamps.
- 12 Handcuffs.
- 6 Wooden Clubs.
- 6 Leather Clubs.
- 6 Police Belts.
- 7 Twisters.
- 6 Police Calls.
- 18 Badges for Police
- 2 Rubber Stamps.
- 1 Health Officer Bad

- 4 Ladder Boxes.
- 60 Badges.
- 2,000 Feet Hose Halyards.
- 240 Feet 2 1-2 Inch Rope for Fire Hooks.
- 5 Scrub Brushes.
- 1 Stove Brush.
- 1 Dust Brush.
- 1 Oil Can.
- 120 Feet 2 1-2 Inch Rope for Hose Carriages.
- 4 Ladder Dogs.

1885

(10) (3)

On the night of April 19, 85 at 10³⁰ P. firemen were summoned to the "Long Island" cottage on Sea Foam Ave. near the skating rink. As the first company approached the scene, the building burst into flame and spread to

^{Totally} a brand new cottage less than fifteen feet away. By the time hose lines were charged, both structures were being fully consumed. Fire brands flew in all directions and two houses on Trident Ave. suffered roof fires. The fire started when Mrs. Littlefield leaned over a stove and ignited a sleeve of her robe. Frantically ripping her clothing off, she set the stove's oil can on fire which exploded engulfing the room in fire. Severely burned, she rushed to the second floor for her child and barely escaped alive.

At this particular fire the value of a fire dept. was put to the test, undoubtedly saving a large amount of property.

On Tues. Nov. 24, 85 at 1³⁰ A the ringing of the Methodist Church bell and a bright glow from the South side of town alerted residents to a ~~fire~~ raging fire in the 70 year old "Sunnyside House" on Sunnyside Ave. The building, 100' long and well known as a fine rooming house, was owned by Charles E. Stevenson. At about the same time the church bell began to ring, fire ward Tewksbury was alerted and he hastily mustered together the members of Hose Co. 1. This company, despite the heavy rain and muddy roads, was the first unit to arrive at the scene. Hose lines were stretched from Woodside Ave. barely reaching the fire. Hose Co. 2 could not reach the blaze from their hydrant and had to send back for more hose.

The wind, blowing steadily out of the N.E. showered Cottage Park with embers, but the rain prevented any roof fires.

1885

(11) (9)

The fire was discovered by the owner's son George when he was awakened by choking smoke. Quickly investigating, he found a brisk fire in the north-east corner of the building which had been unoccupied for several weeks. He immediately turned his attention to the waking of the other occupants, many having to be carried. Shortly after 2³⁰/₄ a pile of charred timbers was all that remained of the old landmark.

According to several newspapers of the day the two new hose companies were thought of by residents as two separate fire departments. Hose Co. 1 was referred to as "the Great Head Dept." and Hose Co. 2 as "the Winthrop Dept." The men of the companies, however, were commonly referred to as the "fire laddies".

This, the second year of the departments' existence, proved to be one of greater organization. Two new companies were formed; the Charles D. Teeksbury men - Hose Co. No 4* and the Deane Winthrop Hook and Ladder Co. No 1. with twenty one men. The ladder truck was housed with Hose 2 at Pauline St. The inventory of dept. ladders owned at this time is as follows: one 35', three 30', three 25' and three 18' roof ladders. The size and number of ladders carried on Ladder one is unknown as Ladder two had not yet been organized. It was, nevertheless, designated the C.A. Rice Hook and Ladder Co. No. 2.

The firemen received for the first time a salary of twenty five cents per hour, which the town fire ward no longer existed as state law provided for a Board of fire Engineers to head the dept. and J.M. Tucker became the first Chief Engineer. Few towns including Winthrop still operate under this system.

To encourage members and maintain the good morale existing, the Engineers recommended that the town increase the remuneration for services and that they furnish all the necessary equipment.

The New England Insurance Exchange announced that they would lower the fire insurance rates from 20 to 25%, according to class of risk, provided the town would introduce a fire alarm telegraph system with properly distributed fire boxes and also increase the fire dept. hose inventory by at least one thousand feet.

Although the town had a very good water system, the fire Dept. requested additional hydrants because the rapid building construction was in some cases ~~putting~~ causing the hose wagons to lay their entire hose loads to put a single stream into operation. Near this period in time the town started to install their own hydrants.

At the end of '86 storage for apparatus was still a problem as three ~~two~~ carriages were still stored in private buildings. The Eastern Fish Co. stored two for \$16.25 and M. C. R. Ford the other for \$12.00.

⊕

Only four fires occurred during the year as follows: May 20, Shirley St. R.R. station, June 29 Mrs. Whorf's house on Pleasant St. which sustained heavy damage, Nov. 27, the Perkins and Tibson's dwellings on Chest Ave., heavy damage. One ~~fire~~ alarm of fire on Dec. 4 at Winthrop Highlands occurred, but no property was destroyed.

⊕

Thurs. Nov. 12 dinner - dance - Hose 2

As the late train was approaching Great Head on Sat. night Nov. 27, some of the train hands noticed smoke coming from an unoccupied house on the Crest between Perkins & Underhill Sts. The alarm signal of five short blasts on the train's whistle was quickly given which aroused the Great Head firemen, who were soon on the spot. Although the fire was beyond control, their efforts and those of Hose Co. 2 prevented the burning of the houses on either side.

To keep a fire contained to the building of origin using the primitive apparatus of the day and companies comprised mostly of inexperienced men was a tremendous accomplishment.

CHARLES S. TEWKSBURY HOSE CO., NO. 4.

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| E. K. Tewksbury, Captain. | G. W. Paul. |
| C. G. Bird, Clerk. | J. S. Washburn. |
| Charles Barrett. | F. M. Melom. |
| W. M. Bacon. | Elijah Brown. |
| Alex. Smith. | Albert Rice. |

DEANE WINTHROP HOOK AND LADDER CO., NO. 1.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Chas. E. Ingalls, Foreman. | Nelson Floyd. |
| David Belcher, Asst. Foreman. | F. A. Tewksbury. |
| C. S. Belcher, Treasurer. | F. W. Tucker. |
| S. E. Griffin, Clerk. | Thos. Houghton. |
| Gilman O. Burrill, Steward. | P. Sheean. |
| F. N. Belcher. | W. W. Belcher. |
| J. H. Putnam. | C. C. Gardner. |
| A. D. Johnson. | J. W. Carle. |
| Daniel McDonald. | A. A. McDonald. |
| Chas. H. Tewksbury, Jr. | Austin Allen. |
| | Benjamin Elwell. |

The Shirley St. Hose House was built during 1887 and was first occupied on _____. This building still stands today at 590 Shirley St., S. E. Tewksbury became Chief on Nov. 2. Two janitors were hired to care for the hose houses and were paid 25¢ per day from Nov. to April. W. M. Flanagan maintained the Shirley St. house and John Kennedy cared for the Pauline St. house.

During the year only two fires occurred which required use of the fire dept. On Oct. 3 a large pile of railroad ties was touched near the Revere St. depot. On Dec. 21 at 13³⁰/_A the "Columbia" cottage at Ocean Spray erupted in flames. ~~which~~ The cottage, a large 2 story structure, was owned by Captain Rollins. Upon arrival of apparatus the "Columbia" was fully involved and flames had nearly consumed an adjoining similar house owned by Mr. Davis.

This fire was believed to be of incendiary origin since both buildings had been vacant for some time. ^{THE} Cost to the town for this fire was \$28.00 for the services of Hose 1, \$31.00 for Hose 4, and \$23.00 for Hook and Ladder 1.

A retired Boston fireman who watched the fire said that with the lack of a fire alarm system and the small number of companies, the men did an admirable job. It was all that a body of men

could do without experienced leadership.

16

1888

~~Model~~ A need for the modernization of apparatus and equipment caused by the rapid growth of the town was now realized. On Nov. 3, 1888 a contract was awarded to The Sawyer + Chase Co. of Lynn, Mass. for the construction of Winthrop's first horse-drawn hose wagon. It was a one-horse rig of highly varnished oak construction with a dark red chassis and wheels. It was smartly striped and lettered in gold leaf and carried 1000' of $2\frac{1}{2}$ " hose. This \$394.00 wagon sported a brass gong & nickel-plated lanterns. Upon delivery it was placed in service as Hose 2.

The volunteers and other citizens provided the necessary horses for the new wagon and were compensated for their use at the same rate of pay received by the firemen.

On Jan. 25, for some unknown reason, the name "C.A. RICE" was to be "painted out forthwith by order of the Chief." This ladder truck was still not in service. On Jan. 31 the names on all other apparatus were removed and replaced by numbers. Ladder 2 was not numbered. A professional sign painter, J. S. Durant, did the lettering for \$21.70.

This move by the Engineers infuriated the fire men as they distinguished themselves by their company names and did not wish to become merely a number. Extreme rivalry and stiff competition existed between the companies and they were constantly trying to out do each other. In this case, however, they banded together and threatened to resign if they were not allowed to retain their company names.

① slight searching of
books & house

1888

* - Rescue

18

The fire escapes, or chutes, and life nets which the law requires every municipal fire dept. to have, were purchased on Oct. 31 from the Boston Woven Hose Co. for \$100.00. This equipment was carried on Sadder 1.

E. B. Floyd was Chief Engineer in 1888 and commanding a dept. of fifty four men.

① The first fire of the year was on March 9 ~~and~~ which was ~~burned~~ an extensive grass fire on Cottage Hill. The second fire was at 1 ³⁰/_A on July 4 when the Cottage Hill Railroad Station was totally destroyed. This fire was believed to be caused by design. An alarm of fire from the Ocean House Hotel on Trident Ave. and Ocean Spray on Aug. 24 caused \$950.00 damage to a number of rooms. On Aug. ^{at 4 PM} 26 the dept. was called to a dwelling on Cottage Hill ~~where~~ owned by Mrs. S. M. Cox where a lighted cigar on a paper covered table caused minor damage to one room. On Sept. 25 the entire dept. ~~was~~ responded again to Cottage Hill where they found a house heavily involved in fire. This fire, caused by an overheated stove on the first floor, totally destroyed the building causing an \$8,075.00 loss.

11 ¹⁵/_{AM}

* which, in some cases, was up to 20 min. in good weather.

During this period in time, fire fighters were seldom able to "make a good stop." The prime reason that so many structures were completely lost by fire was that after pulling their hose carriages to the fire scene the men were often completely fatigued. ~~More~~ ~~often than not, the ^{men} rested upon arrival~~ and more ^{on arrival} often than not simply unable to do much good. Also to be considered is the response time. * Building construction and design allowed a small fire to gain very rapid "BALLOON CONST." also *

~~traffic~~ headway. Generally speaking, ~~just about~~ * which, in some cases, was 15 min. and that was in good weather!

1888

19

Wurthrap

Fire fighters of the 80's had two strikes against them when they left their Hose Houses.

15 Chardon St.

During the summer of 1888 a petition from some fifty tax payers of the Beach and Centre sections of town was submitted asking that some kind of a fire alarm system be placed in operation. After several meetings and investigations, the Engineers decided that the best and cheapest system for the town was one proposed by Mr. George Stevens of Boston. After more meetings it was voted to raise \$1,000. - for this system. On Dec. 13, a contract with Mr. Stevens was signed and work commenced for \$831.00

The installation involved four miles of uninsulated wire, a town striker, a twenty-four jar battery and eight street boxes as follows:

- BOX 08, Great Head Hose House on Shirley St.
- " 12, Cor. Shirley St + Mermaid Ave.
- " 15, Cor. " " + Revere St.
- " 17, Town Hall
- " 19, R.R. bridge, Main St.
- " 24, Pleasant + Lincoln Sts.
- " 26, " " + Sargent Sts.
- " 29, " " + Wurthrap Sts.

P.A. equip.

The batteries and other ~~boxes~~ were installed in a room in the rear of the Pauline St. Hose House. It is unknown where the above mentioned town striker was placed at this time. It is known, however, that the bell was in the immediate vicinity of Metcalf Square.

After working through the winter, Mr. Stevens completed his installation. It was tested and met with the approval of the Engineers. There was however, one drawback to the system. The firemen at ~~the Shirley St.~~ Great Head had no means of knowing of alarms except chances of hearing the bell at Winthrop center. So, to remedy this situation, Mr. Stevens was again called upon to install a strike on the tower bell at Great Head Church ~~which cost~~ Cost for this addition was \$224.80.

During the month of June, Mr. J. S. Perry was contracted by the town to extend the fire alarm system to Point Shirley. which included the placing of box 6 at Shirley and Seven Sts. The new one mile long line, being a circuit line, required two miles of wire making ~~a~~ a total of six miles in town. By the addition of this new line, the batteries had to be increased to 30 jars. This new service to Point Shirley was ~~only \$50.00~~ installed for \$80.00.

A clock was placed in the town Hall and at 12 o'clock day and night, one blow a timing device sent out one blow from the bells assuring that the alarm system is in working order.

All schools were furnished with hose and fire buckets during the year and the fire dept. requested that all hotels, churches, halls and stores have at least a small number of buckets available for immediate use in case of fire.

This was the first year that fire fighters received an annual salary. It amounted to \$1.00 per man and 51 out of the 54 men were eligible. The Engineers were paid \$50.00 for the three per year.

Although there were 57 hydrants in service in '89, the dept. was still in need of an additional 1000 feet of hose.

On Jan 14, 89 the School Dept. took over the second floor of the Shirley St. Hose House causing a slight re-arrangement of Hose men's quarters.

1889

for reasons unknown, (12) (21)

Sometime between Feb. and March, the manpower was reduced on each company but was brought back to full strength by year's end.

On Jan. 4, 89, Hook and Ladder no. 1 was re-named the "Governor Winthrop." On Feb. 1 Hose 2 and 3 were re-organized into one company designated as Hose #2. Records show that M. E. B. Wadsworth stored the ~~remaining~~ hose⁴ carriage (Hose 4) for \$26.38.

To facilitate a quick hook-up of the hose at the Pauline St. house, a swing harness and hanger was purchased for \$56.00. This type of harness was hung from the ceiling on the apparatus floor and was lowered onto the horse in one easy operation.

Only one building fire occurred in 1889 and this was the first time the dept. was summoned from a fire box. On March 14, box 24 was received at 3:03 P.M. for a fire in a dwelling at ~~was~~ the night of Jan. 13. The dwelling, totally destroyed, was on Duvin St. and was owned by R. D. Spenceley of Boston. Severe cold hampered fire fighters but they prevented the fire from extending to other buildings. ★

On March 14, was the first time a fire box summoned the dept. At 3:30 P.M., box 24 was pulled for a grass fire on the property of Mrs. A. P. Snyalls on Bay Side Ave.

On April 26 at 8:20 P.M., the never ending curse of Winthrop fire fighters was placed upon them. Box 19 was received and the first arriving companies found that some person or persons unknown had ripped the outside door from the box and pulled the hook. The select men, realizing the potential danger of this act, offered a one hundred dollar reward for apprehension of the culprit. He was never caught. This false alarm cost taxpayers \$18.50 for the men and apparatus plus \$3.00 for repairs to the fire box.

★ Chief Floyd listed cause as mice and matches

4. A.M.
★
★
Page 13

1889

22

13

On June 26, another ~~false alarm~~ at 8:15 P.M., box 8 was sounded by W.C. Hamilton at the request of a citizen for a reported fire in progress at Fifth Hotel, Pt. Shirley. This box was also false and cost the town \$25.00. On the morning of Oct. 9, it was reported to the Chief Engineer that a fire had broken out in a house on Shirley St., Cottage Hill, owned by D.W. Colby. The fire had burned itself out before firemen arrived causing only minor damage. After determining the cause as arson, a watchman was placed in charge of the building. After an investigation, sufficient evidence was never obtained to connect anyone with the fire.

** On Feb. 2 a false alarm was rung in at box 12 at 7:05 P.M. for some reason, response time of the companies was recorded as follows: Hose 1 was on the spot at 7:11, Hose 2 at 7:12, Hook & Ladder at 7:12 and Hose 4 arrived at 7:15. A report of these times was made to the Insurance Commission.

1890

March 6, 91 contract awarded

Mr. J. B. Tewksbury, a Fire Engineer, was appointed Dept. of Fire Alarm in 1890. In the same year, as the result of a petition from residents of the Highlands, Mr. Tewksbury was contracted for the sum of \$200.00 to extend the fire alarm lines through the Highlands for two miles and place in designated areas boxes 34, 36 and 39. Shirley Road, Lower East, Temple & Cliff respectively. ~~Two~~ ~~one~~ of the old hose carts was sold for ~~\$25.00~~ ~~to~~ ~~\$30.~~ its original builder, A. D. Jackson. During the year three new hydrants were installed and 1,000 feet of new hose was purchased from Eureka Fire Hose Co. at a cost of \$750.00. ~~Hose~~ was a major problem in the early days of fire fighting as no ~~provisions~~ ^{means} for drying hose were ~~installed~~ ^{available before} the construction of the two hose houses. ~~But~~ after a March fire, a large amount of hose was tested at hydrant pressure (75 lbs) and 900' of hose was declared unserviceable. It was found necessary, in conformity with State law, to have this amount of hose re-lined.

On Jan 11 at 1:45 A.M., the entire dept. responded to Box 8 where they found a dwelling, owned by J. T. Gibson*, heavily involved in fire. Luckily, this building was unoccupied at the time. The weather was extremely cold and frozen hydrants caused great delays in getting steam on the burning structure. During these delays, the fire raged out of control and spread to two other dwellings, which were also totally consumed. owned by Joseph Gray and Mrs. M. F. Miller. One other building owned by Mr. Gray was protected and sustained some minor charring. The total insurance paid for all structures was \$7,257.50 and the cost to the town for fire fighting amounted to \$84.50.

On March 23 ~~at~~ the dept. responded to a ~~building~~ box 23 which was pulled for a fire in a house ~~owned by~~ ^{owned by} on Pleasant St owned by Horace Tewksbury. The house was a total loss and

* of James Plain



HOSE CO. #1 - FIRST HORSE DRAWN
PIECE FOR THIS COMPANY. PLACED IN SERVICE
JUNE 1, 1891



HOSE CO. #1 WITH REFURBISHED WAGON
IN 1900

Hose Co. #1 LEAVING NEW QUARTERS
ON SHIRLEY ST. IN 1907

Hose Co. #1 AND TEMPORARY STEAMER
1908

1891

(25) (16)

Money having been appropriated, a contract was awarded to William Sander a local blacksmith, for the construction of a hose wagon. This wagon was a near duplicate of Hose two's wagon and was built in Sander's shop on River St. at a cost of \$390.00. Hose 1 received their new wagon in late May and placed it in service on June 1. Hose 4, which was ~~was~~ a semi-active company at this time, was disbanded and the members re-assigned. **

The dept. ~~now owns~~ ^{owned} 2,850' of hose, but felt that an additional 1,000' was badly needed. The trucks of Hook & Sadder 1 and the still inactive Sadder 2 were found to be inadequate. This was due to insufficient strength caused by design. The additional equipment purchased over the years was too heavy for these chassis, so it was recommended that these two hand-drawn trucks be disposed of and replaced by one new horse-drawn rig. *

The Dept. of F.A. recommended that gongs and indicators be installed in the hose houses so that firemen would not have to depend on hearing the bells tower bells.

B. Tewksbury, a fire engineer, was appointed Dept. of F.A. in 1890 and on March 6, 91, he was awarded a contract to ~~install~~ as a result of a petition by Highlands residents, extend the F.A. lines through the Highlands for two miles and place in designated areas three fire boxes as follows: box 34 Shiloh & Deal, box 36, Silver Crest, and box 39 at Temple & Cliff.

* two of the old hose reels were sold to their original builder, A.S. Jackson for \$50.00.
** The hose reel was stripped of its hose and equip. and was put in storage.

From this point in time on, only the larger more serious fires will be shown. As the population and building construction increases, so do the work of the fire dept. It would be nearly impossible to account for every fire that occurred in any given year.

★
2nd fire

2nd alarm

The W.F.D. called for outside help for the first time in its history. On Dec. 21, 91 ~~at~~ Box 8 was received at 2:40 P.M. ~~The fire~~ located in the basement of the Hawthorne cottage, ~~started from a defective chimney but only minor~~ ~~the fire damage was~~ caused, owned by H. McLaughlin of Boston. The fire, quickly extinguished, was caused by a defective chimney near the boiler. ~~Damage was slight, causing only \$100.00 and did only \$1,000.00 worth of~~ damage. At 5:55 P.M. the same afternoon, Box 8 was pulled for a fire on the second and third floors of the same building. "Owing to four breaks in the water main, no water was to be had from the hydrants." #

For the first time in the f. Dept's history, outside help was summoned from Boston and Chelsea. Steamer 11 from Boston under the command of Capt. Warren and Steamer 2 of Chelsea responded and the fire was rapidly contained. This time the building, used as a boarding house, suffered \$5,600.- in damage. The Revere Water Co. responded to this fire and completed repairs on the following day. Four men and a horse remained at the Pauline St. hose house throughout the night at the Water Co's. expense. occup. BY Shirley St.

★ ★ 1st FIRE

R.B. DEVOE

AUG. 21

~~At 12:40 P.M.~~ On Aug. 21, fire ravaged a stable and caused damage to six nearby buildings. At 12:40 P.M. box 34 at the corner of Pearl Ave. and Shirley St. was pulled for this fire which destroyed 15 horses, 20 carriages & harnesses, 2 sleighs and a large supply of hay and grain.

Summer 1891

Hawthorne Hotel - Total loss
corner of Park Ave &
Hillside Ave.

hydrant/main facilities
(4 breaks in main)

1891

(27) 189

The blaze, burning out of control, leaped to and consumed a laundry and also a dwelling owned by Murphy. The Ocean Spray Hall, and two other dwellings and a store were also partially damaged. The damage as a result of this fire was amounted to \$10,052.20.

~~Fire Dept. records show that fire insurance payments~~
and Fire Dept. records show that the amount paid by the insurance companies for this fire was \$3420.20.

On almost every fire reviewed by this writer, ~~fire insurance was up to~~ and including the present time, buildings record and contents were grossly? under insured.

During the year a mutual-aid agreement with Revere was signed.