

again

In Feb. of 92, a contract was awarded to William Lauder, ~~builder~~ this time for a horse drawn ladder truck. The truck was measured approximately 18' in length and 4' in width. A three tier ladder, each ^{single bank} was installed ~~with rubber rollers to facilitate easy~~ ~~accept~~ the along with tool boxes and equipment holders. Included in the contract was the re-finishing of all ladders to be carried. The color, stamping and lettering was of the same quality as on Hose 1. This truck, designed for a one-horse hitch, cost \$300.00. Extras included were an extension ladder purchased for \$100.00 and a \$50.00 harness. Designated Hook and Ladder 1, the new truck was placed in service on June 23 at the Pauline St. hose house. ^{on the second floor of}

The school room ~~above~~ ^{above} Hose men's quarters was vacated during the year and ~~the area was~~ turned over to the fire dept. After a few minor alterations and a coat of paint, the members of Hose 1 had their meeting and function hall back.

Fire fighters pay was increased to \$.50 per hr. and the town supplied each member with a new rubber fire coat this year. Forty eight coats in all were purchased at a cost of \$3.50 each. The fire fighters, taking a great amount of pride in their jobs, purchased their own uniforms.

For the first time in its history, the dept. had enough hose on hand so that the hose wagons will not have to be reloaded with wet hose.

The amount of hose owned in 92 was 3350' much of which was from the original purchase. There were 61 hydrants in service and the pressure ranged from 65 to 85 pounds. The Engineers purchased a water pressure gauge so that a constant watch could be maintained on the ~~water system~~ press. required for fire fighting.

After an 1891 recommendation
that the two ladder trucks be
eliminated and be replaced by
one due to insufficient strength,

TOP Page 28

12 OCTOBER 1892

H.W.-46-5

Fire Department lined up in front of new fire truck built by Frank Willard Tucker in his barn. Firemen furnished their own uniforms at their own expense and hence their interest in display with the new truck in front of Hook and Ladder 1 and Hose 2 house on north side of Pauline St. with old school house in background, burned Jany. 1906.

Identifications given by Warren Belcher in 1933 as:-

- | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| <u>1-Frank Burrill</u> | <u>2-Nathan Collins</u> | <u>3-Charles Small</u> |
| <u>4-Harry C. Gillmore</u> | <u>5-Jack Douglas</u> | <u>6-Warren Belcher</u> |
| <u>7-Chief E. B. Floyd</u> | <u>8-Munroe Trewoogy</u> | <u>9 H. Schuler</u> |
| <u>10-Emmett Doane</u> | <u>11-Ralph Patch</u> | <u>12-Frank Lamb</u> |
| <u>13-Silas Kilbourn</u> | <u>14-Walter Perkins</u> | <u>15-Geo. W. Wyman</u> |

1933

OCTOBER 12 1892
THE FIRST COLUMBUS DAY

PICTURE OF FIRE DEPT - TAKEN ON PAULINE ST,
WITH SCHOOL IN BACKGROUND ON SITE OF
PRESENT E.B. NEWTON SCHOOL. OLD SCHOOL
BURNED TO GROUND JAN. 22 - 1906. NOTE OLD
FIRE HOUSE DIAGONALLY OPPOSITE PRESENT
BRICK CENTER FIRE HOUSE (1933)

{ IDENTIFICATIONS & DATES
GIVEN BY WARREN BELCHER '6 }

00
12 13

0 0
14 15

- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|---|
| 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | |

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 - FRANK BURRILL (BUNNY'S FATHER) | 8 - MUNROE TREWORGY |
| 2 - NATHAN COLLINS | 9 - LEONARD SCHULER |
| 3 - CHARLIE SMALL | 10 - EMMETT DOANE |
| 4 - HARRY C. GILLMORE (RUBY'S FATHER) | 11 - RALPH PATCH } in team |
| 5 - JACK DOUGLAS | 12 - FRANK LAMB } in team |
| 6 - WARREN BELCHER (PRESENT CHIEF - 1933) | 13 - SILAS MILBOURN |
| 7 - E. BUCK FLOYD, CHIEF (RUBY'S GRANDFATHER) | 14 - WALTER PERKINS (in doorway) |
| | 15 - GEO. WYMAN (RUBY'S GREAT GRANDFATHER) |

M.W. - 5
46

Only one ^{new} fire box was added this year and it was box 22 assigned to the Center School. The fire alarm batteries had to be increased in size and number again as the town now had 12 miles of wire connecting 14 boxes.

Only three fires of any magnitude occurred in 1892. The first fire was on Feb. 29 at 10:30 A.M. Box 34 was pulled for a burning 1½ story cottage on Nevada St. the dwellings two occupants, Mrs. Wadsworth and Mrs. Turnbull, were packing goods in preparation of moving when a kerosene lamp exploded resulting in a blaze that nearly leveled the house.

On April 18, the dept. responded to an alarm from box 17 at 11:35 P.M. where they were met by flames belching from the shoe shop occupied by S. H. Bluffin. As hose lines were being run, the fire extended in one direction to a plumbing shop owned by A. W. Richardson and in another to E. R. George's Harness Shop.

As of this date, records show no serious injuries or deaths from fire in the town.

Early in May Hose Co. #2 secured the services of Edmund W. Floyd as foreman of this Co. He had previously served

as commanding officer of the "Rufus L. Frost Hose Co. #3" of Chelsea for a number of years. He was a very knowledgeable man with vast fire-fighting experience and was a tremendous asset to the dept.

An alarm of fire from box 6 was pulled at 1:00 P.M. on Wed. Sept. 28 which summoned firemen to Point Shirley where just off the old Steamboat wharf was seen the steamer "Watertown" burning furiously. She had left Boston bound for Lynn with a cargo of kerosene, lard and fish when just off Apple Island, according to the Captain, some trouble with the boiler happened causing the fast-spreading blaze.

There were four passengers on board besides the crew and Mr. Wallace Wyman of Pt. Shirley witnessed them jumping into the water to avoid the flames. One woman was badly cut about the head and back by the ship's propeller and was rescued by Wyman. Once ashore, she was treated by the Deer Island doctor but only lived about an hour. Her husband, critically burned, was not expected to survive.

The Boston Police boat "Vigilant" and

1892

(31)

Several tugs in the area responded to the fire, but were too late to be of any use.

The Watertown was beached at the Point and shortly after a huge explosion, caused by the kerosene burner her to the water-line. Firemen worked over the gutted hull for over six hours, but saved nothing.

It was learned that the Watertown was to be de-commissioned during the following week.

1893

32
32

Although only nine years old, the Pauline St. hose house had developed two major problems in 73. One was lack of floor space in the apparatus room. With one ladder truck, one hose wagon and one pump in quarters along with other misc. equipment, only ten square feet of unused space remained. The rear of the building, originally intended to be a stable area, was occupied by the fire alarm system.

The second problem was more serious. Although the stoves were kept burning all winter, there were numerous times when it was feared that the fire alarm batteries would freeze rendering the system inoperable. The Capt. of L.A. demanded and received \$140.00 for the installation of steam heat.

Declared unserviceable by the Engineers, one of the old hook & ladder trucks was sold to Mr. Jackson - Boston for \$90.00 less equipment. Feeling a need to make winter operations more efficient, ~~William~~ two new pumps (sleighs) were ordered from William Jauch, at a cost of \$45.00 each. They were designed and built to carry the same amount of hose and tools as the wagons.

Fire fighters were ~~given a pay raise~~ this year. granted a \$1.00 per yr. raise

Records show only nine bell alarms in 93 of which one was false. The total amount paid by insurance companies was \$4,072.10. The most destructive fire of the year was on Jan 30 at 2:45 P.M. Box 12 was pulled for a house on Shirley St. occupied by Albert Aherson. The fire, totally involving the house, extended to and engulfed a stable on the same property. ~~Fire brands caused damage to~~ Radiated heat caused partial damage to dwellings on either side of the fire building.



Metcalf Square, circa 1893

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Historical Winthrop photo, circa 1893, looking up Pauline Street towards Columbia Square, now Metcalf Square. (Photo was taken from the roof of either the Pauline Street or Center School, now the area of the Willis/E.B. Newton Schools.) The small building in the foreground, with the tower, was the first Center firehouse. The building in the middle of the photo was the old Town Hall, now the site of the Police Station. Above the roof of the old Town Hall you can see the steeple of the old Methodist Church on Winthrop Street. The building on the far left is the rear view of the old Riley's Drug Store (now Nick's) building at the corner of Pauline and Hermon Streets.

JAMES A MCLAUGHLIN
623 PLEASANT ST
WINTHROP, MA 02152

Watch for our next historical mailing which will show a different view of this area.

This historical Winthrop scene is compliments of



Henry Howard

1894

12 alarms

33
33 22

The town spent \$400.00 for improvements in the fire alarm system in 94 and again Mr. Stevens was awarded the contract. Included in the contract was the installation of a striker on the bell in the tower of the Baptist Church on Kemmer St. The fire alarm system activated this striker which produced a suitable signal for the fire men living on the north side of town.

The yearly placing of hydrants had finally caught up with the demands of the town as a report shows that any house in town can be reached with only a few hundred feet of hose.

To facilitate the proper care of fire hose at the Shirley St. house, a hose tower was erected. This tower, over 50' high from the top to cellar floor, could accommodate about 2000' of hose web hose. At the same time, a small stable was built in the rear of the hose house. S. H. Suffin did work for \$500.00.

The Engineers, feeling that the size of the town warranted better fire protection, began formulating plans for hiring permanent drivers. They recommended that the town hire three men and purchase 3 horses. Two horses and two men would be at Pauline St. and one man and one horse at the Beach thereby enabling the apparatus to reach any part of town in five minutes. No action was taken on these recommendations for several years.

There were only twelve bell alarms in 1894 and only one building was ^{totally} destroyed by fire. At 11:05 P.M. on March 10, box 8 was sounded for a fire in an unoccupied dwelling on Cottage Hill. The house, totally consumed by fire on arrival of the dept., was owned by Mr. Osborn of Peabody. The cause of the blaze was never determined. One other fire partially destroyed a house on Tewksbury St. on May 17. This building was also vacant.

* over

1895

34

The severity of the winter of 95 caused officials great concern regarding the Pauline St. Hose House. On the night of Feb 7 the fire alarm batteries froze solid despite the new heating system. This condition was discovered by the Dept. of F.A. when he was unable to strike the no school signal. The next morning

Water pressure was drastically lowered on several occasions during the summer and the Chief feared that a fire would gain terrific headway without the aid of a steamer. But, for some reason, officials were not particularly interested in purchasing a steamer at this time. Most other surrounding communities had purchased them a number of years ago.

Boston in 1855?

SEPT. 4

On Sept. 4, Hose 1 and 2 were dispatched to East Boston to aid in fighting a alarm fire on St.

★ 2/22

Hose 1 returned after one hour, ~~but Hose when other~~ was relieved and but Hose 2 remained on the scene for four hours.

NOV. 19

On Nov. 19 Box 15 was received at 9:00 P.M. Hose 1, the first responding piece, was directed to a fire in a house on Prospect Ave, owned by W.H. Stimpson. The structure was saved but sustained over \$5,000. in damage. Cause the cause was recorded as being an over heated stove in the kitchen.

★ 2/22

At 10:30 P.M. on Feb. 22, a boat builder's shop owned by Alex McDonald and located off Washington Ave. was completely destroyed by a raging fire.

Box 39, Temple & Cliff pulled for this fire at 6:50 A

1896

24 35
30
45

Apparently, the fire dept. had received some criticism regarding their response to alarms. Chief Tewksbury, retorted with the time following words taken from the 1897 Town Report.

" We as a town do not have a man on duty as a permanent fireman; do not own a horse, but have to depend on call-men day or night, and yet some of our citizens will ~~only~~ criticise our dept. for not responding to an alarm as quickly as some of our neighboring cities. I will say here in my report that the men respond as quickly and do their work as well under the present condition of things as any dept. in the state, and I also hope that instead of finding fault and criticising for using twelve minutes in responding to an alarm at mid-night, that they will look for themselves and see how we have to depend on someone to wake, dress, get a horse and ride a quarter of a mile to the Horse House. All this has to be done before we are able to leave the house with the wagon for the fire."

JOHN B. TEWKSBURY, Chief

There were only seven box alarms during 1896 and only one of these was for a high loss fire. On Nov. 20 box 049 was received at 11:50 for a fire in a building on Lincoln St. The building, situated behind a dwelling, was used as a ~~top~~ greenhouse and was totally destroyed when the apparatus arrived. Apparently, a delayed alarm caused the total loss.

1897

LIST OF
F.D. OWNED
EQUIPMENT

36

26

On Oct. 21, 1897 Mr. Caggins resigned his position as Supt. of fire alarm and Austin Cushing was appointed to fill the vacancy. Tape registers were installed in each station to simplify the counting of alarms. Supt. Cushing recommended that the fire alarm system be divided into three circuits so that in the event of damage by any cause, the entire system would not be affected. By the end of 1897, there were twenty fire boxes in service.

Hydrants, numbered eighty by the end of the year and the addition of new hydrants increased at a steady rate.

Records show that J. Smith and E. McLaughlin were sworn in as "Fire Police" on May 12, but their duties were not described.

No serious fires occurred during the year, but one still deserves mention. On Dec. 4 Hose

with Capt. Cobb and Engineer Mahaney responded to Deer Island for a ^{alarm} ~~large brush fire~~. This was the dept's first recorded run to the Island and the men were commended by the Chief of the Boston fire Dept.

On Sept. 28 the members of Hose one held their first Ladies Night and twelve couples attended. The supper was prepared by the members wives and the total cost was only \$8.00. Singing and dancing lasted until 11:00 P.M. and the Engineers presented Hose 1 with a clock for the house.

o fire in a wooden building used as a hospital
time out - 3:15 P.M. - laid 900'
Time in - 8:00 P.M.

1898

37

26

The present Central Fire Station was built during 1898 at a cost of \$11,000.00 and the dedication then included a dinner-dance. Fire fighters and ~~citizens~~ danced to numbers like the Gallop, the Newport and the Portland fancy.

All fire alarm equip. was transferred to ^{the} new station.

On Sept 17 Austin Cushing resigned and A. F. Coggins was re-appointed as Sect. of Fire Alarm. During the year, ~~one~~ ^{two} of the worst storms in history in this part of the country caused a large amount of damage to the fire alarm system. After almost a week, all boxes were back in service.

Mr. Alexander Haggerston of Point Shirley loaned the town a ~~hand down~~ hose reel and the Fire Dept. provided 500' of 2½" hose, nozzles and other accessories for fire protection at the Point. The area residents formed a small volunteer force capable of manning this apparatus. The School Committee, having no longer need for the Point Shirley Schoolhouse, placed its use in the hands of the Fire Dept. With a minimal appropriation, the Engineers fitted out this building for use as a hose house.

Chief Mahaney stated that there existed an urgent need for fire apparatus in the Highlands ~~the~~ and recommended that a hose house be built near the "Leighton House"*. He also recommended that Hose 2 be placed in this house and that a new "combination" be purchased for the Central Station.

Hose problems continued to plague the dept -; particularly Hose 1. Hoses were hard to get in case of fire and more often than not, they were unfit for duty. Records show one case where a baby hose refused to respond to an

* on Cliff Ave.

1898

alarm. He raised such havoc when the alarm gong continued to sound, that the Engineer could not remove him from the apparatus until the owner was called. ~~to take him away.~~ This problem was partially solved when fireman S. Hamilton loaned his horse to the town. This horse was accustomed to the sound of the bells and was fairly well trained. This horse ~~cost the town~~ was provided at a cost for feeding only.

There were fourteen box alarms in 1898. On Feb. 17 at 1⁴⁵/₁₉, Box 36 was sounded for a dwelling fire on Locust St. The house, owned by M. Brayman, was partially destroyed. The cause was recorded as a defective flue. On April 5, the dept. responded to box 15 at 11:00 P.M. where they found the steamship "Henry Morrison" heavily involved in fire while still tied to the wharf on Shirley St. The all-out was sounded five hours later and the owner, Capt. Swift, reported the damage to be \$11,500.00. (2700' hose)

Snow falling, strong wind, intense cold - conflagration on College Hill prevented by the timely snow fall

Ship was preparing to leave her berth as the Gov't. had leased the wharf for the landing of materials for the defenses of Sumner's Cliff. Ship was built about 1870 for the City of Boston for transporting passengers to and from Deer Island. Firemen protected the Win. Steamboat property and stated that they had never experienced a more discomfort from cold and exposure.

re-write

1899

39

On Oct. 2, 1899 Supt. of F.A. Coggins resigned and Mr. Cushing was appointed again. During the year nine new boxes were installed bringing the total to 29. and the overhead wire measured 19 miles. "Tappers" were recommended for fire fighters homes. They would be provided and installed by the town providing the user would agree to pay a minimal yearly maintenance fee. These devices, connected to the fire alarm wire, would tap out all alarms within the town. There are still about 30 of these tappers still in use in Winthrop homes.

The dept., now under the command of Chief J. J. Mahaney, was evidently having difficulties with citizens in the stations. According to a statement by the Chief in the Town Report, he thought that "by laws should be adopted pertaining to control of fire houses. It would be well to specify just what rights outsiders should be allowed to exercise therein, and to have it legally declared that only members of the dept. should be permitted to play cards in any building of the dept."

There were 16 bell alarms in 1899, most of them for building fires. On Feb. 8 Box 133 was struck calling all members to their respective stations for house duty. A severe blizzard was raging and men remained on duty until the fourteenth. At 8:30 P.M. on Feb. 10, Box 29 was struck for a dwelling fire on Dean Ave. The building, owned by Green and occupied by W. F. Teal was completely destroyed as flames raged from the first through the third floor. Dept. records note that this was the coldest night ever encountered by the dept. that the temp. was -6° and twenty five hundred feet of hose was laid at this fire and for a while it appeared that

1899

(40)

(24)

an unfrozen hydrant did not exist in the area
On Dec. 13 at 11:15 P.M., the dept. responded to box
32 where they found two houses on Shark Beach
nearly burned to the ground. Again on Dec. 24
at the same location, three cottages were fully
involved at 12:50 A.M. Used as summer homes,
these buildings were unoccupied.

1900

(41)

(20)

J. B. Tewksbury became chief in 1900 and many improvements took place in the dept. A new Chemical wagon was placed in service at the ~~Center~~ Center station in Oct. It was designated Chemical Co. #1 and was a one-horse wagon. Carrying about 70 gallons of chemical and ~~a few hundred feet~~ of 150' small diameter hose, it was a very speedy and light weight wagon. It was invaluable in stopping fires in the incipient stage. ~~As~~ the cost of this wagon from the Reverse Water Co. was \$325.00.

House three, also known as Reel three, at Point Shirley was completely re-organized under the jurisdiction of the dept in May. The company's officers were Capt. A. Hagerston, Lt. E. Lougee, Clerk George Wells and Treas. W. R. Tewksbury.

In April the Engineers hired Capt. M. F. Smith of House 2 to take charge of the Center station as a janitor. * In May Ralph Patch, also a fireman with House 1, was hired to care for the Shirley St. house and also drive the street watering cart. The salary for these jobs was \$12.00 per. week. On Nov. 1900 A. F. Coggins was appointed as the town's

first permanent fire fighter and was assigned to the Center station as driver of Chemical 1. He was also responsible for the fire alarm batteries and all apparatus and equipment. His salary was \$12.00 per. week. C. E. Tewksbury was appointed to replace Mr. Patch at House 1, and he became the first permanent driver of that company. His pay was also \$12.00 per. wk.

Early in Dec., four horses were placed in the Center station at an expense to the dept. for their keeping only.

There were fourteen box alarms during the year. One of the most serious fires occurred on Jan 3 at 1:50 A.M. at Durlow's Block near box 17 on Shirley St.

* 1 horse bought from TOUCINE LAVOIX for \$150.00 & placed at House 1

BLACK

1900

(42)

(~~31~~)

This fire, confined to the cellar, was in a building comprised of two stores on the first floor with three apartments above.

At 12:35 A.M. on April 3 a fire of incendiary origin nearly totally destroyed a $1\frac{1}{2}$ story unoccupied house on Cutler St. Overlapping fire was showing on arrival and Hose 1 quickly laid lines to protect the exposures in this congested area.

1901

(42)



On ~~Nov 19, 19~~ Jan. 28, 01 J. McCarthy was appointed to the permanent dept. as driver of Hose 2. and ~~on~~ in Oct. F.W. Weston was appointed and assigned as driver of Ladder 1. C.E. Tewksbury was appointed to fill the position of Hose 1 vacated by Ralph Patch ~~Coggins and Tewksbury were~~ ~~was~~

Promoted To -

2 gray and 2 bay horses

made Captains at a salary of \$15.00 per. wk. and Weston, and McCarthy, ^{Tewksbury} received \$12.00 per. wk. *
two ~~four~~ horses were purchased during the year and were placed at the Center Station. at ~~two "Bay" horses~~ were a cost of \$550.00.

The Town was now providing fire protection for Ft. Banks & One of the dept's duties was to escort powder shipments in and out of Town. **

It is interesting to note that in 1901 the ground ladders carried by ~~the~~ ladder ~~truck~~ totaled 227' and in 1976 Ladder 1 carries 225' not counting the 75' aerial ladder. In both instances the total amount of ladders carried surpassed State requirements. ^{totally}

Only one building was destroyed by fire during the year. At 3:00 P.M. on Thursday, Oct. 24 1901, Box 49 was sounded for a fire at Lincoln St. first arriving Hose 2 found the house owned by George Sleeper fully involved. Brands from this fire landed on the roof of a nearby dwelling destroying the roof.

owned by Basford
The amount of damage to both structures was \$5,000.-

* Tewksbury paid same as Captain during warm weather for driving watering cart.

actually

** These shipments were escorted by a Hose Co. and were turned over to a Boston ~~Company~~ at the Beebe Isle bridge
Comb. #4