

1843 ————— 1943

100th Anniversary Program

OF THE

Hydraulic Engine & Hose Co., No. 1

BRISTOL, R. I.

JULY 22, 1943

ORGANIZED JULY 22, 1843

History of the Company

Mr. Toastmaster, comrades of the Hydraulion Company, and guests:

"To me has been assigned the task of presenting to you at this celebration tonight some historical facts relating to the long service which the Hydraulion Company has given to this community. It is particularly fitting that some such review should be presented to you at this time, and that there might be matters more interesting and enjoyable to you, this effort of mine to speak of the company's activities for such a long period, must necessarily be limited, that this occasion may be what it was intended to be, namely, one of enjoyment, merriment and jollification.

The 100th anniversary of the Hydraulion Company that is being observed tonight is the span of years from July 22, 1843, the date of the formal organization of this company. Not only has the Hydraulion Company been in existence for that period but for over six years previous to that date there was a Hydraulion Company attached to what was then the 'new' Hydraulion engine purchased by the Town of Bristol for its protection from fire hazards. At a town meeting held May 11, 1836, over 100 years ago, a committee comprising John Norris, Benjamin Tilley and William B. Spooner, the latter the grandfather of the present Orderly of this company, was appointed to purchase a new Hydraulion engine, the cost not to exceed \$1,000. It might be of interest to you to learn that the population of the town of Bristol in 1836-1837, was 3,400. The engine Hydraulion was purchased in New Bedford, Mass., where it was built by Richmond that same year, 1836. It arrived in Bristol in the late fall of that year and according to conversations I have had with men who were members in the 'long ago, and have since passed on, the Hydraulion engine was the "real thing." Most of you here have seen the engine. It is now owned by the company, having been presented to it by the Town of Bristol. A picture of it is in the large frame hanging on the east wall of our assembly room. The engine appeared in several Fourth of July parades in the past years. It is safe to say, I believe, that no modern motorized fire apparatus ever occasioned the pride that the Hydraulion engine did when it came to Bristol. To us of the present day its appearance and its ability to "get there" at a fire, seems crude as a factor in fire fighting compared with present day apparatus. It not only appears so, but it is. The engine is small, with end stroke of the double deck style, with "pulpit" and the pumps are five inches in diameter. Its last service at a fire was about the year 1896, when the ice house of John A. C. Gladding located on Easterbrooks avenue, was burned. It was used to pump water on the fire from the National India Rubber Company reservoir. It has since been loaned to a Historical Society at New Bedford, Mass., to be placed in a museum.

At the time of the addition of the Hydraulion to the fire companies of the town early in 1837, there were three engine companies and a hook and ladder company. The three engines of the other companies referred to were of the "bucket tub" style and could only deliver the water from the boxes of the engine, as they could not draught the water and deliver it. The first engine of the "bucket tub" style came to Bristol in 1784, and was known as Engine No. 1. The Hydraulion engine was the first that came to Bristol that could do both. In the city of Providence there were two 'Hydraulion' engines, Nos. 1 and 2, and "Hydraulion Street" as it was then called is now, I believe, called Exchange street.

There were small buildings located at the foot of Constitution, State and Bradford streets in which these "bucket tub" engines were housed. Upon an alarm of fire the members of the companies would "run with the machine" and the people of the town would go to the scene of the fire with their fire buckets, which, by law, they were obliged to have in their dwellings. Lines of men, and women, too, would be formed and on one side would be passed the buckets filled with water which was put in the box of the engine and the empty buckets returned by the opposite line of men and women to the wells or cisterns which were located about the town for the purpose of furnishing water for fire purposes. And thus these men and women in long line passed and re-passed the filled and emptied buckets for many hours when the occasion required, be it day or night. And lest we forget, there was a stalwart crew of men comprising the company who 'broke her down' on these 'bucket tubs' and pumped on them for many hours, to force the water from the box into which it was poured, onto the blazing building or other property that was on fire. I have heard from the lips of some of the old enthusiasts of the early days of the hand-pumped fire engines that it was great

sport when the "bucket brigade" would overflow with water the boxes of the small engines and the pumping crews could not work fast enough to deliver all of the water. To my mind there were two objects in that particular "contest," one of which was to speed up the handling of the buckets and the other to stimulate any lagging on the part of the pumping crews after they had worked for many hours with their boots frozen in the ice that formed about them as they worked.

The purchase of the Hydraulion, while it did not do away with the "bucket tubs," was regarded as a great improvement in fire protection in this town. We, who look at the engine as it now appears can hardly believe that the cost of the machine was \$1,000. But, like all new inventions, the price was high, even for those days.

From reports made by a committee who went to New Bedford in 1836 to inquire into the merits of the then new Hydraulion engine, it is gleaned "that the engine was satisfactory in every way as it draughted the water and also threw a stream that reached the top of a two-story building."

To those who were members of the company in its early days there was always a high regard for what we now call the "old" Hydraulion.

It was the law previous to 1836, and for a number of years afterwards, that the members of the fire companies should be elected from the "Freemen" of the town at the town meetings.

While reading the records of the Town Meeting held May 11, 1896, at which \$1,000 was appropriated to purchase a new "Hydraulion" fire engine, I found this interesting item in the records of the same meeting:

"Voted: That the hook and ladder company have the wheels, shafts, etc., of the old hearse for the transportation of their apparatus."

According to the records it appears as though the town meeting of that date was in the hands of the friends of the Hydraulion.

At a town meeting held April 22, 1837, the first Hydraulion Company was elected and was composed of the following, the first named being captain of the company:

George H. Pearse, James E. Chace, William H. Pitman, Thomas Thurston, James H. Gladding, Jonathan D. Waldron, George F. Hoard, Nathaniel S. Greene, Caleb W. Anthony, John G. Harding, James M. Gifford, Henry W. Gladding, Nathaniel A. Bishop, Job Williston, Jr., Joseph Chace, Allen Munro, Jr., Josephus Gooding, Nathan Warren, Jr., Benjamin Easterbrooks, John W. Dearth, James M. Gooding, Thomas White, Martin Bennett, John H. Wardwel', Thomas Almy, James Bowler, James Hoar, Amos Wilson, Abner Midget, William Davis, George Davis, William Fales, Elisha B. Franklin, Thomas Wilson, Jr., William Bullock, Aaron Easterbrooks, Jr., James Brown, Henry Brown.

Nearly every one of these men were known by the older members of this organization of the present day; known for their good citizenship and reliability, and most of them lived to reach a ripe old age. Trials of the new engine were held with an occasional fire to attend, and then, for a pastime, assembling to wash the copper riveted leather hose with which the engine was equipped. An occasional coating of tallow to the leather hose to keep it pliable, was necessary, and this part of the 'lite of a fireman' was willingly participated in by the men as being in the line of duty. The greasing, or applying the coating of tallow to the leather hose was the forerunner of the wax-treated modern fire hose in use today.

On July 1, 1842, the news reached this town, not by radio, telephone, telegraph, aeroplane, rail road or mail, but by a messenger with horse and carriage that there was a big fire in progress in Fall River, Mass., and the officials of that city requested assistance from this town to stop the spread of the flames which were levelling the business section in about the same location as the fire which recently took place on Feb. 2 and 3, 1928. The Town of Bristol sent its best of those days—the Hydraulion engine and its company of men, in response to the request. A sloop lying at one of the wharves was pressed into service, the Hydraulion engine with a supply of hose was placed on board, and with a good-sized company, set sail for Fall River. The story of the service rendered on that occasion by the Hydraulion and its men has been told and retold and is very familiar to all of us, so that it does not need repeating here. Suffice it to say that much credit and praise were given to the Hydraulion by citizens and city officials of Fall River for their successful efforts in stopping the conflagration. The newspapers of the day, in this section, contained many complimentary notices of the "spendid assistance" given by the Hydraulion on that occasion.

On the return of the Hydraulion engine and the men from the Fall River conflagration, a renewed enthusiasm was manifested and it was decided to organize the company on a better basis than it had been, as there appeared to be a lack of organiza-

tion. The men attached to the engine desired to say who should be members of their company, instead of the town meeting electing them. A meeting was held in what was then a sail loft on the upper floor of the building now owned by the Seth Paul Company which stands on the west side of Thames street, next north of the office of the Seth Paul Company. At that meeting, held on July 22, 1843—100 years ago—an organization was formed to be known as the Hydraulion Engine and Hose Company, No. 1. Officers were chosen and Amos Crandall was elected Foreman.

The original members of the company were: Amos Crandall, Joseph F. Thompson, Philip B. Bourn, Gideon Gifford, J. Frederic Baars, Crawford Easterbrooks, James E. Chace, Peter J. Bradford, Nathan Warren, Jr., Hezekiah J. Pitman, who was the first clerk in 1843, James H. Gladding, Hiram Frisbie, Edward I. Thompson, Jason D. Simmons, John Gladding, 3rd, Gilbert T. Norris, Abner Midget, Benjamin B. Slade, Cyrus B. Eddy, George Davis, Nathan M. Bunn, Ira P. Slade, Benjamin Murphy, John R. Slade, Samuel Mott, John Peck, William Bullock, Leonard Sanford, Seneture Benard, Thomas Pearse, Seth Lincoln and William Davis. A number of these men were members of the company elected in town meeting May 11, 1836. Many of them were employed in the old shipyard of Stanton and Skinner at the foot of Oliver street, but all were prominent in the town.

At the celebration of the Fourth of July, 1896, half a dozen or more of these original members were guests of the company in the parade of that day. At the January session of the General Assembly of 1844, the company was incorporated.

From that time to the present, the Hydraulion Engine and Hose Company has been an important organization in rendering service to this town and its people. Its service has been given without cost to the town, except for housing and equipment, and when community service is spoken of, I believe that all of the volunteer firemen should be first on the list to be appreciated. They respond to many calls during each year, without any thoughts of their own personal discomforts, danger, possible injury or whether or not their work is appreciated. And they keep on going when the calls come. Unlike any other community service that has been organized or in existence, it renders service without inquiry and without price, as to whether or not the property owner is a voter, whether or not he is with us or against us, where he was born or what his color or creed is, or whether his worldly goods be much or little. The love and enthusiasm of the volunteer fireman for the work in which he is enlisted as a member of our firefighting companies creates within him a feeling of pride in the achievements of the company of which he is a member, in rendering that service to the town and its people. And he goes out to render that service in any and all conditions of weather, any and all hours of the day and night. In the summer's heat and winter's cold, he is ready to respond to the call for help. When we hear the siren alarm and we listen to the district numbers telling us where assistance is needed about 2 o'clock in the darkness of a morning of a day in January when a blizzard of wind and snow is raging, we are apt to snuggle down in a warm bed, content ourselves with the thought: "It's a tough night for a fire," and resume our sleep. Not so with the volunteer fireman. He goes out into the storm not knowing what may befall him before he returns. Injuries or illness may be awaiting him, but that does not deter him. He is banded with many others in rendering community service and he gives his best to what we might call, a voice of distress.

Do we realize as much as we should that the services given by our volunteer firemen are about the only public services that are given to us without those services being paid for?

The purchase of another hand fire engine in 1846 and the organization of a new company known as King Philip Engine Co., No. 4, created considerable rivalry between the Hydraulions and the King Philips. The latter's engine was what is known as a side-bar, single chamber machine, much after the type of the Buiton engines. The rivalry that existed between those two companies made things pretty lively in fire department circles in Bristol and the honors of "first water" at fires was, indeed, something to be proud of and hastened both of those companies' responses to the ringing of the alarms on the bell of the First Baptist Church and the cries of "Fire!" shouted by the town's two night watchmen. Unless the blaze or its reflection or the smoke from the fire was to be seen, the companies and apparatus were, many times, at a loss where to go. The rivalry referred to between the Hydraulions and King Philips brought them together many times in "Water Battles" at fires and men of both organizations fought these "Water Battles" with streams turned on each other, with resultant drenchings, but no flinchings or backing out. The "Water Battle" between fire companies has come before the public lately as a form of amusement for prizes, but in those

older days it was solely for the glory of driving the other fellows out and was usually done away from public view.

With two draughtings and delivering engines in the fire department the use of the three "bucket tubs" was lessened and just previous to 1850, it was not necessary for the people of the town to take the fire buckets from their homes and go to the fires. These bucket engines were stored for many years and afterwards sold.

From the late Edward I. Thompson, who was a much-beloved member of the Hydraulion from its very early days until his death in 1908, I have learned that the Hydraulions and King Philips engaged in many "Wash Outs," as he called them, and in many trials of stream throwing.

In the absence of other happenings the news from outside the town and particularly the State, did not travel very fast, the abilities of the engines and crews formed the principal topics of discussion for many years. The addition of the steam fire engine built by Cole Brothers of Pawtucket, to the fire department, hastened the decline of the use of the hand fire engines. With the institution of a system of pipes and hydrants through the compact part of the town which supplied salt water for fire purposes from a pumping station located in the rear of what is now the Ever Ready Fire Company station, the hand-pumped engines were not used at fires unless it was for service outside the hydrant district. Hose carriages were hauled by hand to the location of the fires. The water pressure during the time that salt water was pumped was good. This system of pipes and hydrants was turned over to the Bristol and Warren Water Works when the corporation contracted to supply the town with water.

From the humble beginning of the Hydraulions to the present is a long stretch of time. The hand-pumped and hand-drawn engines gave way to the powerful steam fire engines and now the wonderful labor-saving and speedy machines in the modern gasoline-propelled motorized apparatus that reaches the location of a fire in a few minutes, takes their places. Equipped with everything, it would seem, that could possibly be anticipated for the handling of a blaze, the modern, motorized apparatus is now found in every little village and hamlet in the land. Who will venture to say what will replace it? The volunteer firemen of the present day, like those of 1843, and before that date, are accustomed to the apparatus and equipment of their time, and possess that same indomitable spirit of rendering to their fellowmen and the community the best that is in them, as did those stalwart men who ran with and pumped the machines in the long ago.

Some of the principal large and disastrous fires many years ago at which the Hydraulion Company worked, in addition to the Fall River conflagration, were the Bristol Steam Mill, manufacturing cotton goods, then located where the Collins & Aikman Corp. now stands, burned in 1843; Iron Castings Factory, Thames street, burned in 1852; St. Michael's Church, burned Dec. 5, 1858, replaced by the present or fourth edifice of that parish; the Oakum Factory on Franklin street, in 1858; the steam saw and planing mill then located south of the Collins & Aikman Corp. plant, 1857; also known as the Steam Thread Mill, burned the second time in 1861, and the same building occupied by James Connery and in part by John H. Soule, boat builder, burned the third time, April 21, 1878; residence of James DeWolf, Woodlawn avenue, where two men were killed and many others burned and injured, May 11, 1860.

The burning of the Pokomoket Mill, now a part of the Collins & Aikman Corp. plant, Feb. 13, 1856, entailed a loss of \$110,000 to the owners and throwing out of work for a year of 200 employees.

Perhaps the most disastrous fire to the people of the town and the company, was that of the National Rubber Company, which broke out on Jan. 11, 1870. The fire started at 11 o'clock in the morning and in a short time was beyond control. Isaac F. Williams, superintendent of the plant at that time, sent out a general call for assistance and two steamers were immediately shipped from Providence aboard the "City of Newport." The loss was estimated at about \$250,000.

Other disastrous fires which have occurred in Bristol include the curing department, National Rubber Co., Dec. 24, 1873; Namquit Mill, \$20,000 loss, Oct. 5, 1874; Cooper Shop, Phoenix Sugar Refinery, June 28, 1875; house coal and wood buildings, barns and sheds, Gifford and Paull's wharves, all night fires, Feb. 2, 1879; machine shop, National Rubber Co., April 2, 1879; boiler room National Rubber Co., caused by explosion of boiler, Oct. 11, 1879; Steamboat Empire State burned May 14, 1887; John Connery's store, State street, Feb. 10, 1888.

The company rendered assistance in the Town of Warren at the fire which destroyed St. Mary's Church in 1881, and the big fire at the large factory of the Warren

Manufacturing Company. The latter occurred Oct. 3, 1895. The following is taken from a clipping that appeared in the newspaper the next day:

"At about 7 o'clock on the evening of Oct. 3, 1895, the Town was startled by the alarm that one of the large mills belonging to the Warren Manufacturing Company was in flames. In a short time a large crowd gathered, and from all points viewed the greatest conflagration that ever occurred in Warren, with the exception of that kindled during the Revolution. The fire originated in or near the boiler room in No. 1 building where a quantity of cotton had been paced to dry over night. This cotton, it is supposed, was ignited by sparks from the engine. The bells of the various churches immediately took up the cry. It very soon became evident that assistance from outside must be called. John Waterman of the Warren Manufacturing Company, telephoned to Bristol, Providence and Fall River asking for aid. The Hydraulion Hose Company of Bristol immediately responded to the summons. The Fall River Fire Department sent their new engine, Metacomet, dashing over the long stretch of road, arriving at the scene of the fire in about one and one-quarter hours. A special train from Providence brought Steamers 5 and 8 with hose carts. But for the assistance rendered by Providence, Bristol and Fall River, the disastrous results of the fire would have been much greater. The out-of-town firemen were entertained at Goff's Hotel before leaving for home."

Several members of the Company who are still with us at the present time, went to Warren in horsedrawn carriages to help extinguish this fire. The members are: Daniel G. Coggeshall, Walter H. Coggeshall, Thomas Meiggs, Everett L. B. Church, Benjamin Dorstrom, William B. Spooner.

On the muster field this organization was well known having been in competition with companies from Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Rhode Island. On its trips to the cities and towns where musters were held there was always a good time from the participants' standpoint. Even if no prizes were won, many lasting friendships were made on these trips.

This company held the first hand-engine muster in Bristol, Aug. 25, 1898 at Mt. Hope. They entered the Rhode Island State Firemen's League at its first field day and muster, June 21, 1900, and also at several other musters of the League in recent years.

In 1902 at the League muster held in East Providence, this company won the State championship in competition with a field of 15 engines.

Several trips to Portland, Brunswick and Rockland, Maine, will ever be delightfully remembered by those who participated in them.

Of the many foremen who led the Hydraulions, those who are now living are the following:

Daniel G. Coggeshall, from Jan. 3, 1899 to Jan. 5, 1906

Walter H. Coggeshall, from Jan. 5, 1906 to May 6, 1914

(Both resigned to become Chief of Bristol Fire Department)

John J. Byrnes, May 6, 1914 to Jan. 4, 1915

Robert J. Anderson, Jan. 4, 1915 to Jan. 3, 1920, and also from January, 1921 to 1926

Charles L. Pendleton, January, 1920 to 1921

James F. Meiggs, from January, 1926 to January, 1935

Henry M. Campbell, from January, 1935 to January, 1938

Frederick Coggeshall, from January, 1938 to January, 1941

Oscar Pivin, the present incumbent, from January, 1941

The oldest in continuous membership, is Daniel G. Coggeshall, who joined the company June 16, 1881, thus making 62 years of unbroken membership. There are members who joined the company previous to that date, but their record of service is not continuous.

On Monday evening, July 23, 1928, our company celebrated the 85th anniversary of its founding. The evening was spent with a banquet, and speaking followed for entertainment. The late Judge Frank H. Hammill was toastmaster. Daniel G. Coggeshall and Philip Brady, outstanding members of the Hydraulion, were happily felicitated by the various speakers in conjunction with the long and enviable record with the company. Each was presented a token of the esteem in which he was held by fellow firemen, and citizens of the town. Former Chief of the Bristol Fire Department Coggeshall was presented a chest of silver, and Historian Brady, a beautiful dual chimed clock. Both Coggeshall and Brady were deeply affected by the presentation of the gifts,

and responded graciously. Daniel G. Coggeshall is the oldest active member of the company in the point of continuous service. He has served as a member of the Fire Company for 62 years, and Brady had served for 36 years. General L. H. Callan, President of the Town Council, extended greetings and congratulations in behalf of the citizens of the town. He paid high tribute to those who were instrumental in forming the company, and the present members of the company who, by their faithfulness and attentiveness to their duties, have made an enviable record for the company. Walter H. Hildreth of Lakewood, President of the Rhode Island State Firemen's League, and a retired Captain of the Providence Fire Department, paid high tribute to the members past and present for the high efficiency that the company has maintained during the 85 years of its existence. One of the features of the evening was an exhibition of old time clog dancing by Happy Jack Mullen, then 77, Captain of the Watchemoket Fire Company of East Providence. Mullen also gave many reminiscences of the long ago and said that their company and the Hydraulions were tied for the honor of saving the largest number of cellars. Of great interest to those present was the history of the company, read by Historian Brady. He was roundly applauded after reading the same, and was extended a vote of thanks. Many of the speakers referred to Brady's history during their remarks, and suggested that it should be spread upon the records of the company and handed down to posterity in printed form. Among those present were the following members of the company who had served 25 years or more:

Daniel G. Coggeshall, 47 years
William B. Spooner, 40 years
Thomas J. Meiggs, 38 years
Raymond A. Card, 38 years
Everett L. B. Church, 37 years
Philip Brady, 36 years
Albert Sparks, 35 years
Amasa C. Williston
J. Winthrop DeWolf, 30 years
A. Russell Newman, 30 years
Robert J. Anderson, 35 years
Prescott A. Hoar, 25 years
William Paine, 25 years
Benjamin Dorstrom, 31 years

As you will note, several of the members are again with us tonight, and others have gone to the Great Beyond—"May They Rest in Peace."

A few of the deceased members who served the company as officers, and served it well, are the following:

Edward I. Thompson, who joined the company July 22, 1843, and remained a member until his death, Sept. 15, 1935—a period of 62 years.
Edwin Sparks, Foreman, died Oct. 18, 1897
Elery Dunbar, Foreman, died May 22, 1893
Charles C. Wilson, Foreman, and also Chief of Fire Department, died April, 1935
Spencer Rounds, Foreman, May 23, 1873 to Jan. 1, 1879
Raymond A. Card, Clerk for a period of 35 years, died Jan. 8, 1938
Julian Close, Treasurer 18 years, died, 1932
Henry M. Thompson, Foreman, from Dec. 26, 1871 to April 30, 1873
Hezekiah J. Pitman, first Clerk of company, died May, 1896
Frank E. Spencer, Foreman, from Jan. 3, 1877 to Jan. 1, 1879
Philip Brady, Clerk, died Dec. 24, 1931

As in all fire companies, the general topic of conversation when members gathered in their hall, is fires that have occurred in and about our town and vicinity. Some of them which are very often talked of are the following:

Feb. 2, 1928, the great Fall River fire that started in the Pocasset Mills and caused the terrible conflagration. The Ever Ready pumper responded to the fire under the leadership of Fire Chief John J. Grabert, and several of the Hydraulion members assisted in extinguishing the blaze.

On the morning of Jan. 23, the Hydraulion pumper, with several of the members,

again proceeded to Fall River to render help in extinguishing the general alarm fire in the downtown section of the city.

Again on the night of Oct. 12, 1941 at 11:45 p. m., the Hydraulion pumper and its members, were called to Fall River to help fight the 13 million dollar Firestone fire which burned for a period of 13 hours before it was brought under control. The following is a clipping taken from the Bristol Phoenix on Oct. 14:

"Bristol firemen responded gallantly to the two-State alarm sent out by the Fall River Fire Department shortly before midnight Saturday, when the blaze at the Firestone Rubber and Latex factory was at its height.

The call for help from Bristol was received at 11:45 and at midnight the Bristol crew was laying its hose ready to battle the flames which had already destroyed one of the concern's eight buildings. Fifteen hours later the local crew was still on duty.

A grocer, one painter, an office worker, motion picture machine operator and two wire workers—but firemen all—left the station on the first call. The "Hydes" truck, manned by Foreman Oscar Pivin, had as passengers Fire Commissioner Henry F. Serbst and Foreman Oliver J. Lemaire, both of the Dreadnaught Company; First Lieut. Jefferson Goff and Second Lieut. Frank Trask of the Hydraulions, and John McGovern of the Defiance.

At the fire they were joined by about 15 more Bristol firemen, who made the trip to the Spindle City in private automobiles. The first crew remained on duty to 12 o'clock Sunday noon when they were relieved by a fresh detail in charge of Assistant Chief Harry R. Gray, Sr.

"We weren't there two minutes," said one Bristol fireman, "when we were given orders to go to the wharf and lay two lines of hose. We went right to work and within five minutes were playing our hose on the second building to catch fire—the first having already been destroyed."

Describing the blaze as terrific, as well as dangerous, the firemen declared that on two occasions "we had to pull away from the fire because of tumbling walls." He said that the Bristol crew "stayed with the fire" until 5 a. m. Sunday morning when we were ordered to play our hose on outside buildings in the vicinity of the Firestone plant.

The Bristol department was ordered to return to its home station at 4 o'clock Sunday afternoon.

"The Bristol crew worked as well as any of the paid departments there," said one official, who declared that they displayed "good team work and never slackened their speed."

Many from this town took advantage of the opportunity yesterday to visit the scene of the fire which Washington officials said, represents a loss of a good percentage of the total emergency rubber stock in this country."

A subsidiary of Firestone Tire and Rubber Company, the Fall River plant was engaged in making self-sealing fuel and oil tanks for airplanes, pilot seats for planes, metallic belt links for machine gun ammunition belts, barrage balloons and gas masks."

The company has responded several times to Warren in recent years to render aid at their fires.

Some of the more serious fires which have taken place in our town in recent years are as follows:

Belvedere roof garden, March 5, 1928; Colt Dairy barn, Aug. 4, 1936; K. of C. Home, March 7, 1924; Pastime Theatre, Feb. 5, 1932; Ferrycliffe Farm dairy, Aug. 8, 1930; residence of William G. Low, Nov. 18, 1940; Makowsky's block, Jan. 5, 1929; Mt. Hope block, Jan. 12, 1931; Agernon Johnston's store, Jan. 2, 1927; Stanzione residence, April 24, 1926, at which three children were burned to death; Georgio fireworks explosion, Aug. 9, 1926, at which four people were killed and three houses demolished.

The company at the present time has a membership of 70 active, and 10 honorary members. The following members have been placed on the Honor Roll, having answered the call from our country, and are serving with the United States Forces.

UNITED STATES ARMY

Lawrence Andrade
Ralph Church
Gaetano Castigliero
Arthur Cordeiro
William Head

UNITED STATES NAVY

Frank Andrade
Anthony Balzano
Donald Felix
William McCaw
Frank Panzarrella

Edward Luther
Mario Troiano
Edward Wilkinson
Fred Wilkinson

George Pendleton
Joseph Quinn
Victor Trask
Alfred Xavier

At the beginning of World War Two our company was first to organize an auxiliary fire company. The task of doing this was left in the hands of Former Chief of Fire Department John J. Grabert, who spent several hours in the training of this group, which consists of about 20 boys ranging in age from 16 to 19. The boys show a great amount of interest, and although one-half of them are now in the United States Forces, they are still very active and have become a very valuable assistance to us.

Since our founding our company has had the honor of having their fellow members elevated to the office of Chief of the Fire Department:

Spencer Rounds
Charles Wilson
Daniel G. Coggeshall
Walter H. Coggeshall
John J. Grabert
Robert J. Anderson

During the years of our service to the town, the Hydraulion Company has given faithful service in several ways other than the fighting of fires. Records of many instances of help rendered to several of our townsmen when in dire distress were met. These cases are handled by a committee of three members and at no time do the names of those helped appear in any records, and they are given no publicity. Even the members of our company know nothing as to whom help has been given, the committee reporting at its meeting that "a certain amount of money was expended for charity."

In the social activities of our organization some of you will remember the fairs held in the old Bristol Opera House where several prizes were awarded yearly ranging from a subscription to the Bristol Phoenix, to a parlor suite, and in one instance, a pony and a cart. These fairs were always preceded by a parade at which a large part of the townspeople took part.

Our yearly meeting, for a long time, at the completion of the election of officers, has been followed by a turkey supper which most of us here tonight are quite familiar with.

In the past few years we have held several carnivals, clambakes and minstrel shows.

This company since its beginning has had several types of fire apparatus, starting with the old side-bar machine spoken of earlier in the evening and then followed by the hand-drawn hose reel, and then the white hose carriage drawn by hand which we used for a long time until the town purchased the 500-gallon Seagrave triple combination pumper which was in service for 20 years. This was replaced by the 1,000-gallon triple combination Ahrens-Fox pumper now in service.

In bringing this brief history to a close, the officers and members of the Hydraulion Company wish to extend our sincere thanks to our Town Officials, past and present, for the many favors granted us, and also to the people of the Town of Bristol for their hearty support and co-operation in all our activities.

We heartily consider it an honor to have as our guests here tonight, men representing all walks of life, men representing State and National Government, our Town Government, Fire Department officials, industrial heads, and other good friends who helped in a large way to keep our town the best in the land.

Mottos and verses were appropriate and plentiful in the olden days and in closing I wish to quote the following verse found in our records of about 75 years ago, and recited by our beloved comrade, Philip Brady, at the 85th Anniversary of our Company:

"When the flames are raging high
'God' and the 'Firemen' is the cry,
When the fire is out and all is righted—
God is forgotten, and the Firemen slighted."