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## For Reference

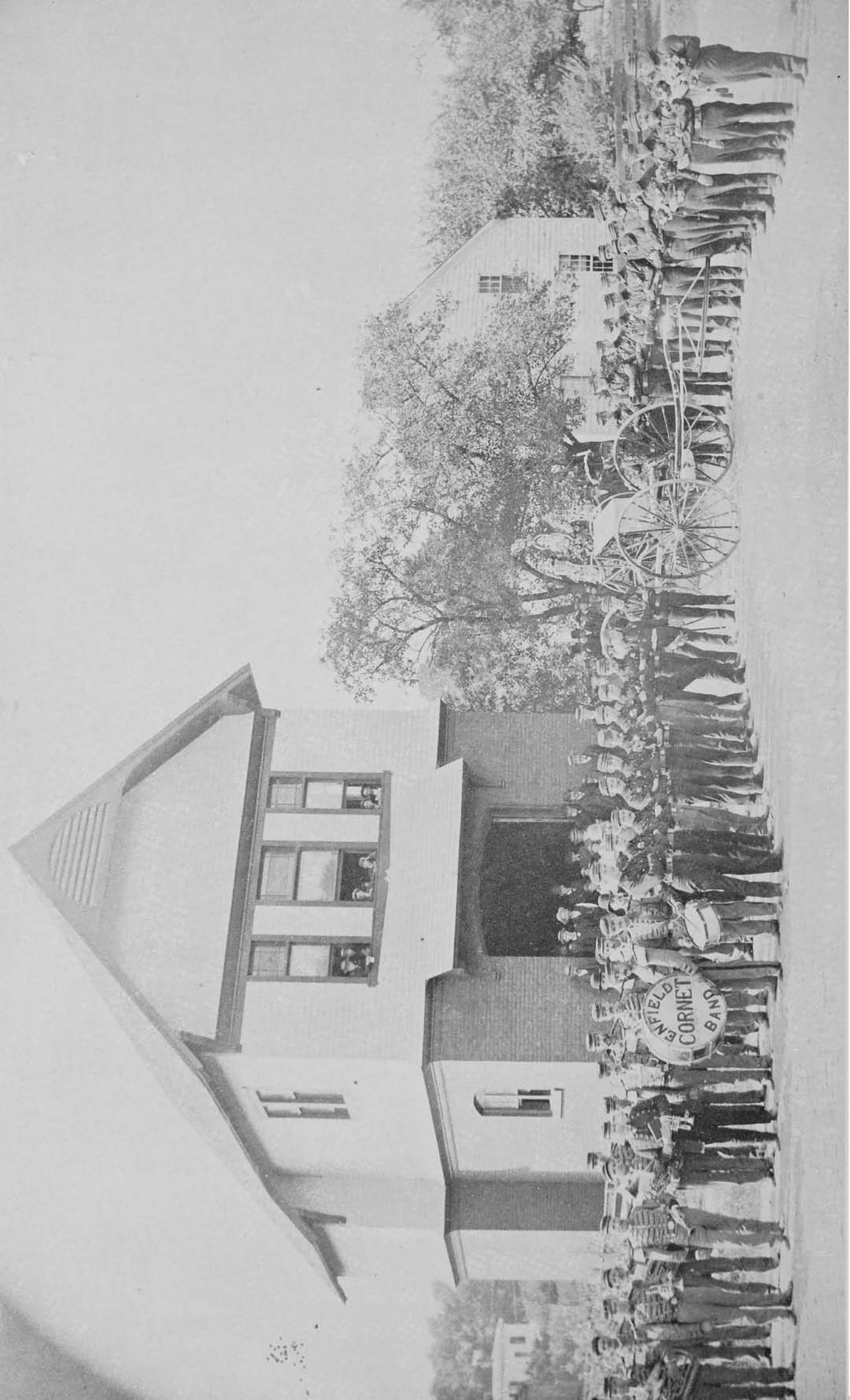
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FIRE CHIEF WEAVER  
Appointed Ass't Chief Oct. 16, 1953  
Appointed Chief January 26, 1958



ARRIVAL OF OUR FIRST HAND TRUCK—1886



SYLVESTOR NORTON  
First Foreman—1863-1865  
Elected Dec. 31, 1863



CLINTON CASS  
President New York State  
Firemen's Association—1928-1929



JAY BISHOP  
Chief of Ithaca Fire Department  
1909



BLACK DAN  
Our First Horse Drawn Truck—1908  
Casper VanDyne, Driver

### History of Cataract Hose Co. No. 7

By

W. Glenn Norris, County Historian  
Member of Fire Co. No. 8, Protective Police

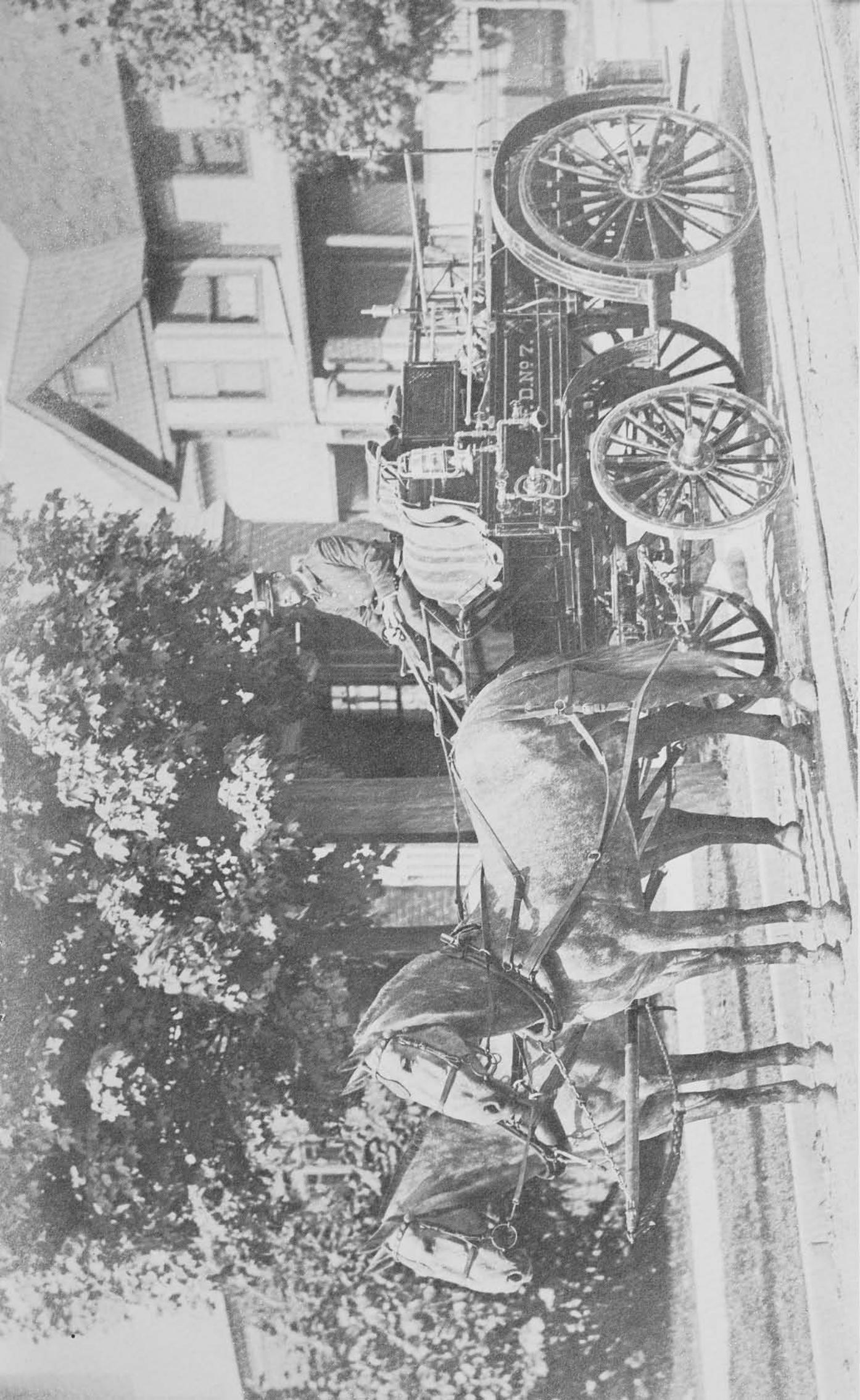
On December 31, 1863, Cataract Hose Co. No. 7 was formally organized as the newest member of the Ithaca Fire Department. It took its name from the nearby scenic attraction, Ithaca Falls, a precipitous cataract nearly 120 feet high.

On the company's parade banner, Ithaca Falls is pictured with the numeral 7 appearing as a rocky projection on the face of the falls. Old members of the company maintain that the number 7 can be seen when the right volume of water is flowing over the cataract.

On the 100th anniversary of its founding an historical sketch of its long service to the City of Ithaca and the Fall Creek community, shows that it has fulfilled its purpose in protecting life and property and in maintaining interest as a volunteer fire company.

Let us now consider the Fall Creek area. In 1816 Phineas Bennett, an enterprising business man, bought a large strip of land along the banks of Fall Creek, and a new industrial center had its beginning. Bennett built a plaster mill and a carding mill and as early as 1817 he erected a gristmill and probably that same year had a sawmill in operation. Down through the years





OUR SECOND AND LAST HORSE DRAWN TRUCK—1911



Our first motorized truck—Put in operation February 3, 1914.  
Roger Banfield and James Saunders, Drivers

there followed other mills, shops and factories. The Ithaca Gun Company is now the last of a long line of local industries.

Houses for workers were built and in time a small community developed that acquired the name Fall Creek Village. This name appears on early deeds and maps pertaining to this locality. Fall Creek Village was a mile from the business center of the village of Ithaca, where fire companies 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 were quartered. As all apparatus was hand drawn and operated, fire in the Fall Creek section with a good start usually had fatal results.

There were no paved streets in the north end when No. 7's was organized. Linn Street was the main road north out of Ithaca. Aurora Street was the next street opened at an early date. Later, Tioga and Cayuga Streets were extended to Fall Creek where they connected to the Lake Road, or Lake Street, now known as East Shore Drive, north of Fall Creek.

It would be difficult for a person of a later generation to picture the condition of the streets in those early days. There were only a few scattered houses north of Farm Street. The streets were uncurbed, lined with brush and trees, swamps and pasture land where cattle, pigs and geese freely roamed. They were pitted with deep sink holes, almost impassable in wet weather and rutted and dusty in dry.





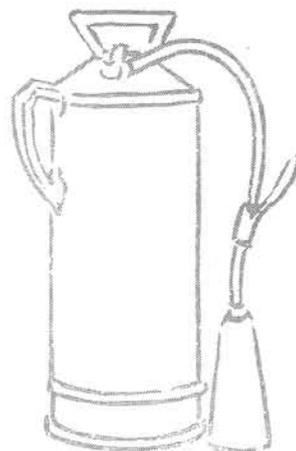
Our Second Truck—Chief Travis; Bexley Wilkinson, Driver; Capt. Hranek.

No wonder then that where uptown companies had to answer a call from Fall Creek, if and when they arrived it was usually too late. Two disastrous fires: the Mack, Andrus & Woodruff Paper Mill fire in 1846 and the Woolen Mill fire in 1851, as well as other minor losses, pointed up the need for local fire protection.

But in 1863, the county was engaged in a gigantic struggle for its existence. Two of the greatest battles of the Civil War had been fought during the year: the siege of Vicksburg and the battle of Gettysburg. The draft was taking the younger men and the uptown companies were feeling the loss of active members. However, Fall Creekers decided it was time to act, and organizing efforts got underway. A formal request, with a list of charter members, was submitted to the trustees of Ithaca village and favorably acted upon.

It was during the term of village president George McChain, that the trustees purchased from Elizabeth Manning a lot 28 feet by 66 feet on the south side of East Green Street, east of Aurora, and erected a new wooden engine house for Cataract Hose Company. Peter Apgar, the contractor, was paid \$1500. It had a tall wooden tower for drying hose and was designated in reports as Fall Creek Tower.

Its fire fighting apparatus descended from Company No. 4. This equipment consisted of a hand pumping engine in good working order, made by L. Button, Water-



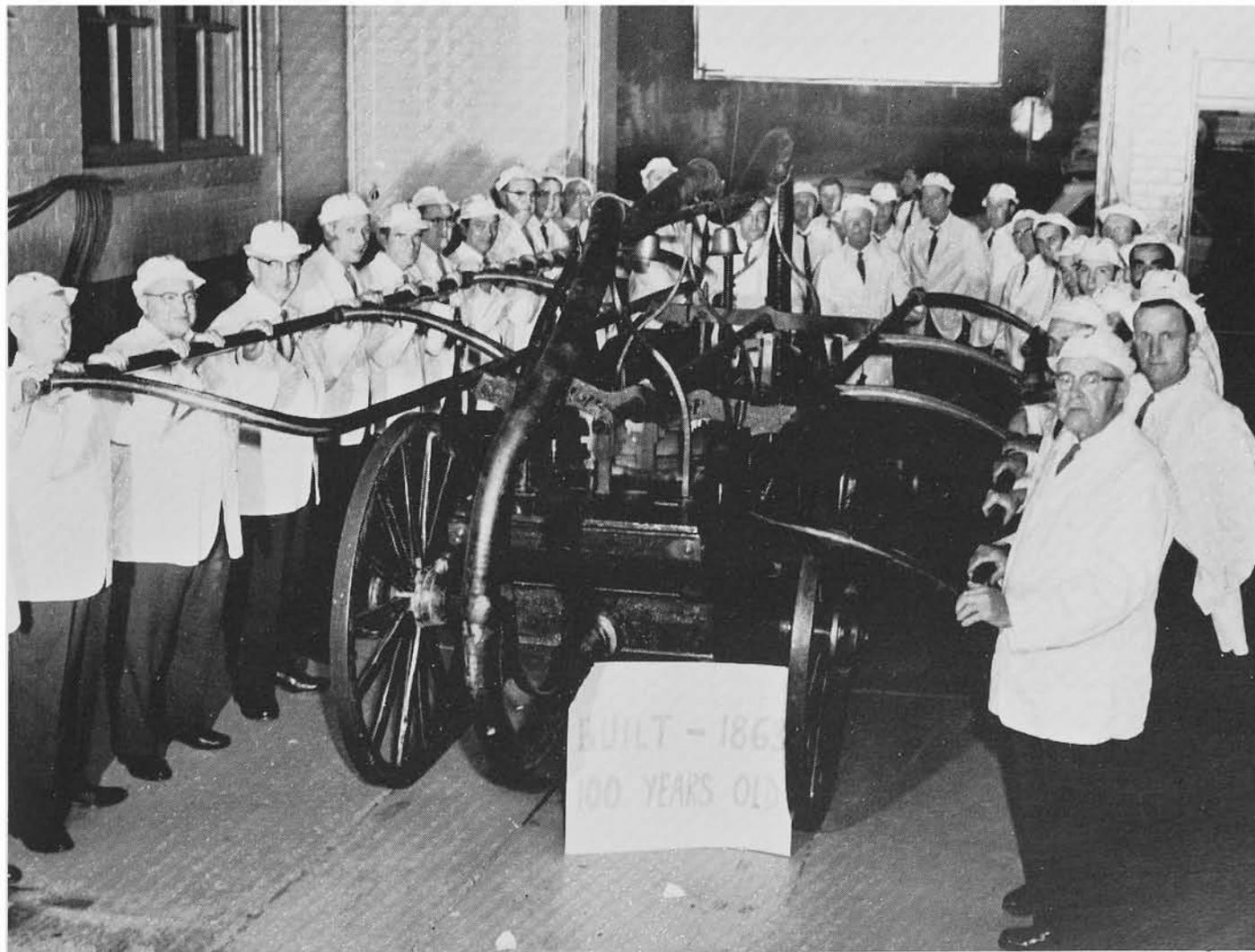






George Harper, Driver; Al Burns, Pres.; John Schmidt, 1st Lieut.;  
Jim Beatty, Capt.; and Jack Howland, 2nd Lieut.







The decoration of the rooms for the Central New York Firemen's Convention—1899

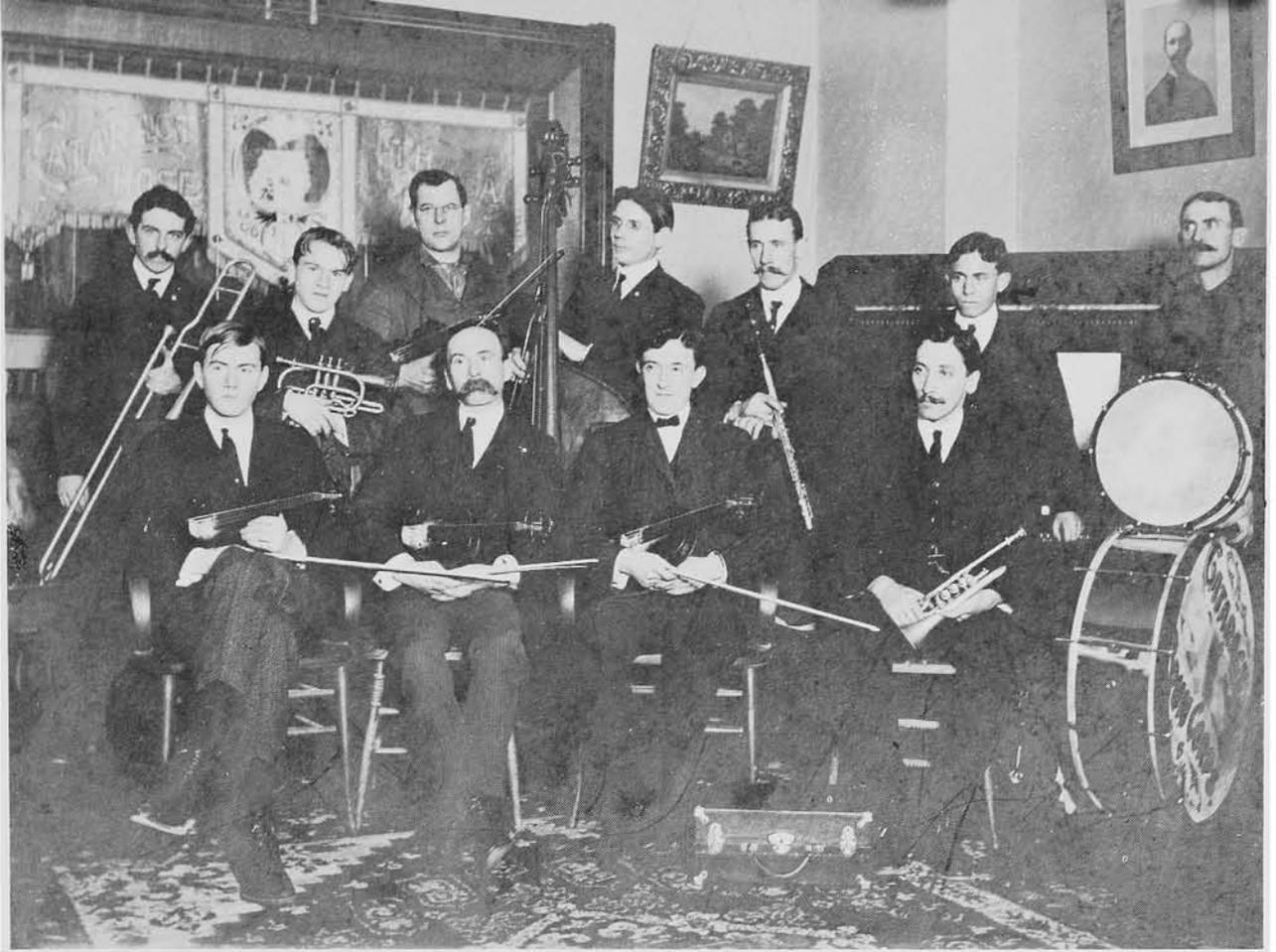
ford, New York, and first put in use by Company No. 4 in 1842. It had two 9-inch diameter cylinders with an 8-inch stroke. The engine was attended by a four-wheel hose carriage, "carrying good, tolerable and poor hose"—the latter, leather hose. Also two torches, two lanterns, one axe, eight spanners, one coal stove, pipe and one coal scuttle.

The officers were foreman, Sylvester Norton, boatman; first assistant foreman, Ed. Tree, Jr., paper maker; second assistant, George Norton, boatman. Prominent charter members, called commuting members, were George Schuyler, druggist; Alonzo Cornell, banker, Ezra's oldest son and later, 25th governor of New York State; Frank Cornell, farmer; Chauncey L. Grant, banker; A. M. Hull, mill proprietor; George McChain, paper manufacturer; F. K. Andrus, paper manufacturer.

In 1867 an experiment was proposed for furnishing the police at Village Hall with rockets. As soon as any false alarm was ascertained, or that companies 6 or 7 would not be required, a rocket was to be sent up as a signal to those companies to return to their rooms. The writer has not been able to learn if this scheme was actually tried, or if it was successful.

Some time in the late summer of 1884, Fall Creek Tower went up in flames. The apparatus was saved but the company's original minute book apparently was a casualty.





Number 7's Orchestra that played for dances held in the rooms in the 1900's.

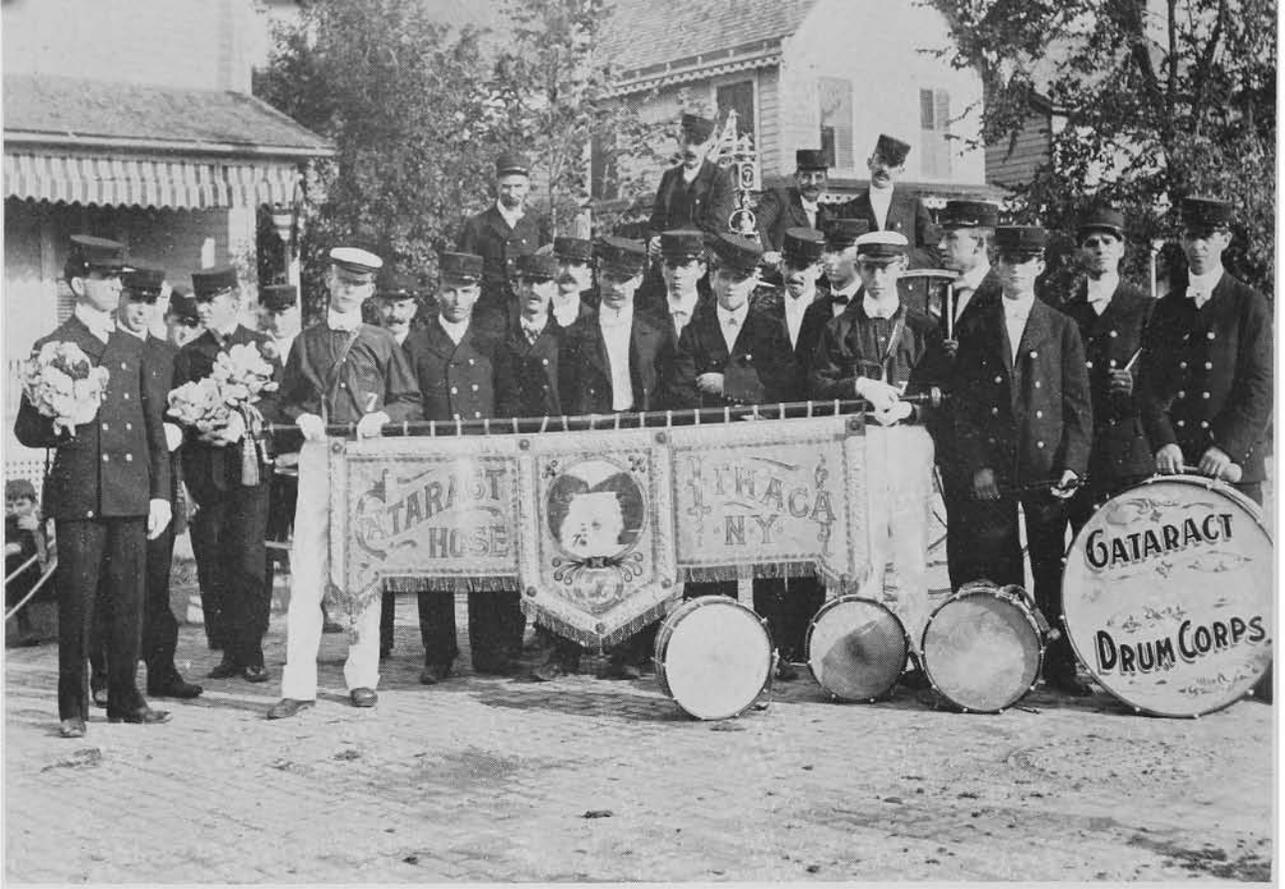
A special meeting was called in November to take up the matter of new quarters. George Linderberry's proposition to use a room in the paper mill for meeting purposes was considered. At a regular meeting December 4, 1884, on motion Linderberry's proposed room was rented for three dollars a month. Also, the secretary was instructed to procure the necessary books and charge the same to the company. This indicates strongly that the company's original records were lost in the fire.

A new building for No. 7's was being considered by the village trustees and at the May 1885 meeting, a committee was appointed to look after the plans of the company's new quarters.

By this time, residential growth had spread northward and Fall Creek as a separate hamlet was absorbed as a component part of Ithaca which became a city by legislative enactment of a charter in 1888.

During the summer agitation for new uniforms resulted in appointment of a committee to select items to wear for parade purposes. New caps, belts and shirts were ordered. With a new building of their own being built on North Tioga Street, it was voted to open the rooms with a festival. Music was procured and the new quarters were opened by a social event, November 4, 1885. Upon opening the rooms, several regulatory rules were passed. One was, that card playing be not allowed in the building, but dominoes, checkers and chess be allowed.





Number 7's Drum Corps that marched in Firemen's Parades in the 1800's.

On July 30, 1886, a new hose carriage for No. 7 arrived by railroad. In the evening the Village Board of Trustees and the entire fire department, headed by the Mecklenburg Band, marched to the Inlet. From there No. 7's and the new hose carriage were escorted up State Street to Aurora and thence to the quarters. There the cart was delivered to the company by village president, Collingwood Brown. Then the line broke ranks and all entered the new rooms where refreshments were served and the visitors royally entertained.



About the year 1908, the Cataracts acquired a new means of locomotion. Black Dan, a well-trained fire horse was transferred to them from Company No. 2, and a horse-drawn hose cart was placed in commission. Black Dan was a great favorite with the company, but age crept up on him and he was eventually replaced with two matched dapple grays.

The city fathers could not bear to think of these sturdy animals standing idle and consuming food, so they were given the extra job of hauling a garbage wagon in the North End. The city dump at that time was along the Pier Road, where the Newman Golf Course is located. I remember one time hearing the fire bell uptown which was answered by a loud, noisy whistle at the sewer pumping station on lower Cascadilla Creek. No. 7's team was just turning off Railroad Avenue (Lincoln Street) to the dump. The driver wheeled his team around and headed for the Tioga Street rooms on a dead run, garbage and ashes decorating the street as he passed.

Jay Bishop, one-time captain of the Cataracts, brought



Championship Running Team of 1908.  
Casper VanDyne, Coach

up the subject of an auto fire apparatus. Inquiry by him showed that a few taxpayers in the north end of the city were willing to put ten or fifteen dollars into the project. J. B. suggested a No. 7 Booster Committee to arouse interest and the following were appointed: J. Bishop, Jack Cummings, Earl Miller, E. A. (Deke) Rogers, Howard Morgan, John Leachtnauer and Thad Seamon.

Eb. Tremain owned a 72 h.p., six-cylinder Thomas Flier passenger car that would suit their purpose, and he agreed to sell it for \$1,000 and he said he would give the company a present of \$200.

The Lang & Button Garage agreed to put the motor in first-class condition for \$200. The estimated cost of converting the Thomas car into a fire truck was \$1700.

In anticipation of the arrival of the new piece of equipment the rooms had to be altered to accommodate it. Before alterations could be completed, the truck arrived February 3, 1914. Extra help was put on and the changes were completed.

The fire commissioners were in favor of having a few men made familiar with the driving, and having one paid driver appointed. Eugene Smith was appointed caretaker and driver. A notice was posted that a crew of eight men would go on the machine.

The members never took this notice seriously. A ride on a self-propelled fire truck in those early days was an exciting and rare experience. Once, answering an alarm from East Hill, the truck was overloaded with members. Driver Smith remarked that no company would beat him, and he set out to prove it. Zooming around the corner





Getting ready for inspection for the 1920 New York State Firemen's Convention.

of State and Tioga on two wheels, he just missed the curb by inches—and the crew thought they were going to land in Mayer's Cigar Store.

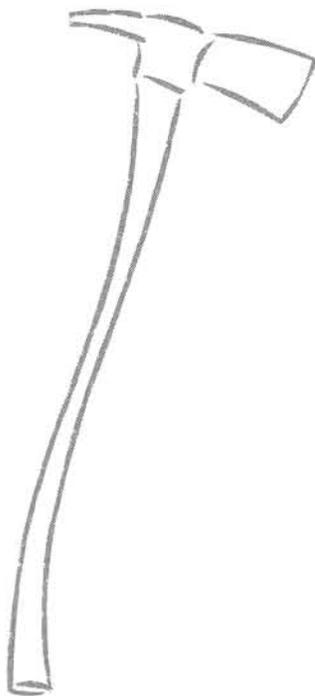
The original converted truck served its time well and was replaced by a factory-built truck; a hand-me-down from Company No. 1. This, too, served its time until December 1950 when the present, modern and complete La France fire truck was put in commission.

From the beginning, No. 7's was a congenial and social group. The rooms have served as a social center where dances, games and suppers created a friendly atmosphere. The company down through the century has fostered all kinds of sports and supported them with a lively interest: Prize-winning running teams, baseball, basketball, bowling, to name a few, and in later years a Cub Scout troop under Ken Flynn was sponsored.

Fairs, carnivals and boat picnics were taken in stride, either to raise money for the company or just for community benefit. The company sponsored its own Bishop's Drum Corp, and voted permission "for them to use the rooms one night a week for practice; that is, if the neighbors do not object; they playing for nothing on parade days."

The writer, when he was a little shaver, was invited to join the corp and stood on a table trying to wheedle some sour notes out of a fife. At one time the company boasted an orchestra of its own.

So 100 years, like water over a dam, has passed and No. 7's can look back with pride on a century of accomplishment, and likewise, look forward with the same enthusiasm to the second century, now beginning.



## CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

Roger Stout, Chairman  
 Jim Bailey  
 Jim Beatty  
 Albert Burns  
 John Burns

Clifford Diemond  
 George Diemond  
 Albert Hile  
 Leon Holman  
 John Howland

John Hranek  
 Ray Paetow  
 Abbott Philip  
 John Schmitt  
 Oliver Wilcox

## CATARACT HOSE CO. NO. 7 MEMBERSHIP LIST WITH YEARS OF SERVICE

1907	Edward Moore	(56 yrs.)		Mickey Carlison	
1911	Lyle Seamon	(52 yrs.)		George Diemond	
1912	Floyd Whiting	(51 yrs.)		Jack Howland	
1913	D. F. Head	(50 yrs.)		Morey Kelleher	
1916	D. Hutchinson	(47 yrs.)		Doug Stone, Sr.	
1917	Bill McGraw	(46 yrs.)	1947	Ray Brown	(16 yrs.)
1918	Max Hagin	(45 yrs.)		Cero Ferretti	
1920	Herb McGraw	(43 yrs.)		Morey Bristol	
	Asbury Roskelly		1948	Clifford Diemond	(15 yrs.)
	Ray Townsend			Ivan Durling	
1921	Clarence (Jim) Bailey	(42 yrs.)		Ollie Wilcox	
	Charles Wilkinson		1949	Norm Howell	(14 yrs.)
1922	Grant Freer	(41 yrs.)		Joe Solomon	
	George Little		1950	Robert Alexander	(13 yrs.)
1923	Archie Howland	(40 yrs.)		John DeSantis	
	John Burns			Hunna Johns	
1925	D. Ryant	(38 yrs.)	1952	Ken Bloom	(11 yrs.)
1926	Bill Pendelton	(37 yrs.)		Don Brink, Sr.	
	George Wheaton			Dom Fiore	
1928	Ralph Holman	(35 yrs.)		David Hurd	
1929	Lavere Brown	(34 yrs.)		John Schmitt	
	Ken Flynn		1953	Leo Deeb	(10 yrs.)
	Don Roskelly			Joe Gainey	
1930	Earl MacDougall	(33 yrs.)		Mike Hancy	
1931	Paul Malone	(32 yrs.)		Ted Holmes	
1932	Bob Brown	(31 yrs.)		Bob Middaugh	
	Charles Wiegand			Bob Nobles	
1933	Fred Hagin	(30 yrs.)		Hart Scofield	
	Joe Moore			Francis Welsh	
	George Shaw		1954	Gordon Begent	(9 yrs.)
1934	Dick Brown	(29 yrs.)		Lawrence Cobb	
	Floyd Durling		1955	Steve Myskow	(8 yrs.)
	Bill McGuire			Vic Newhart	
	Bob Roskelly			Abbott Philip	
	Jim Updyke		1958	Jim Beatty	(5 yrs.)
	Chris Tottey			Jack Bortz	
1935	Bob Cornish	(28 yrs.)		Don Scaglione	
	Leon Holman			Dick Sweet	
1936	Ernie Southby	(27 yrs.)	1959	Rog Marion	(4 yrs.)
1938	Roger Stout	(25 yrs.)	1960	Joe Boronkay	(3 yrs.)
1939	Ray Paetow	(24 yrs.)		Bob Diemond	
	Raymond (Cy) Howland			Tom Ferris	
1940	Al Burns	(23 yrs.)		Gary Swartout	
1941	Fred Dennis	(22 yrs.)		Pete Velleti	
	Lawrence Flynn		1961	Albert Hile	(2 yrs.)
1943	Pete Fenner	(20 yrs.)	1962	Sanete Bassanelli	(1 yr.)
	John Hranek			Don Brink, Jr.	
1944	Domingo Aguilar	(19 yrs.)		Earl Brown, Jr.	
	Doug Egbert			Loren Cloyes	
	John Hughes			Jerald Jordan	
	Jerry Kirby			Keith Houghtling	
	Edward Shea		1963	Carleton Corey	
	Henry Smith			Stuart Grinnell	
	Edward Swanson			Glenn Darling	
1945	Warren Grinnell	(18 yrs.)		John Stone	
	Howard Moffett			Doug Stone, Jr.	
	Ralph Patterson			John Puleo	
	John Shipe			Robert Pierce	
1946	Charles Bloom	(17 yrs.)		Thomas Kirby	