

would run down and ring the fire alarm to summon the volunteer firefighters.”

On October 16, 1894, a committee was appointed to start raising funds to buy land and erect a new firehouse. This was to include a new, up-to-date alarm system.

When the Borough of Fanwood was chartered in 1895, the council passed an ordinance creating the Fire Department of the Borough of Fanwood. The heads of the department were to be the chief of the Fanwood Fire Department and his assistant chiefs. On January 13, 1896, the Fire Company notified the borough that it would accept the appointment as the Fanwood Fire Department.

During this period discipline was rigidly enforced. Fines were levied against anyone absent from a fire or if they failed to return to the firehouse after the incident. The chief foreman was the only person who could excuse a member from this responsibility. Any member failing to pay the fines was given one additional meeting to pay. If at that point he still did not pay the fine, he was expelled.

In 1895 the chief reported to the membership the need for an increase in the water supply. He complained that many of the hydrants were supplying only a “half-stream”, which meant that many buildings, including the Clubhouse, were beyond any real protection. He also mentioned the fact that the Fire Company only owned 500 feet of hose, which was not enough to reach these dwellings. This report proved to be prescient as the chief’s annual report for 1896 shows:

“We have had during the year two practical experiences in fire duty and also practical demonstrations of the complete inefficiency of our hose supply. On April 26, the first alarm of the season was rung about two in the morning and the thirty or more men who responded to the call will testify to the fact that the fire would have burned just as well without our valuable assistance. The Plainfield Fire Department rendered us valuable

assistance by attaching about 1500 feet of hose to our 500 feet and we were thus enable to see the Plainfield people play on the ruins of what was once a Dago shanty. The holocaust of sundry insects must have been colossal tho’ no list of casualties has been preserved. - Our second practical illustration was the burning of the Terrill Road Railroad Bridge on May 16. On this occasion we were successful in allowing the bridge to become a total wreck. We responded promptly to the alarm of fire and stretched our 500 feet of hose and then sat down and waited for our friends from Plainfield to appear. They arrived in due course and helped us out with about 1200 feet of hose and we thus managed to reach the scene of the conflagration and threw a stream of water 3 feet in length on the bridge and thus demonstrated the value of the water system. I cannot refrain from again paying tribute to the gallant and meritorious conduct of Fireman L. J. Ellis in his heroic effort to save the hose nozzle from destruction. His action is unparalleled in the annals of this company. The only casualty reported was the total destruction of the chiefs’ handsome black satin necktie.”

On December 15, 1896, a petition for an additional 500 feet of hose, signed by most of the borough’s citizens was presented to the borough council. The additional hose arrived on May 17, 1897.

At the October 19, 1897 meeting, Fire Company President H.P. Robinson reported the purchase of a piece of land on Watson Road for \$250 from Henry E. Hall. A \$1200 contract was awarded for the construction of a new firehouse. The building committee reported that they had insufficient funds in the new-building account to cover the cost of construction, so the membership gave President Robinson authorization to acquire a \$900 mortgage for the additional funds. One month