

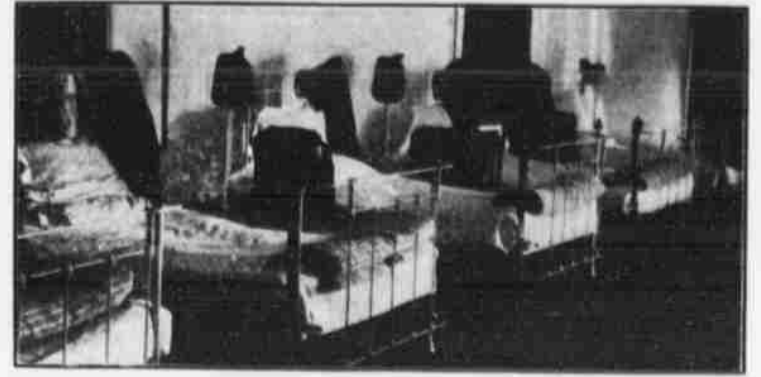
Well Equipped Private Fire Departments



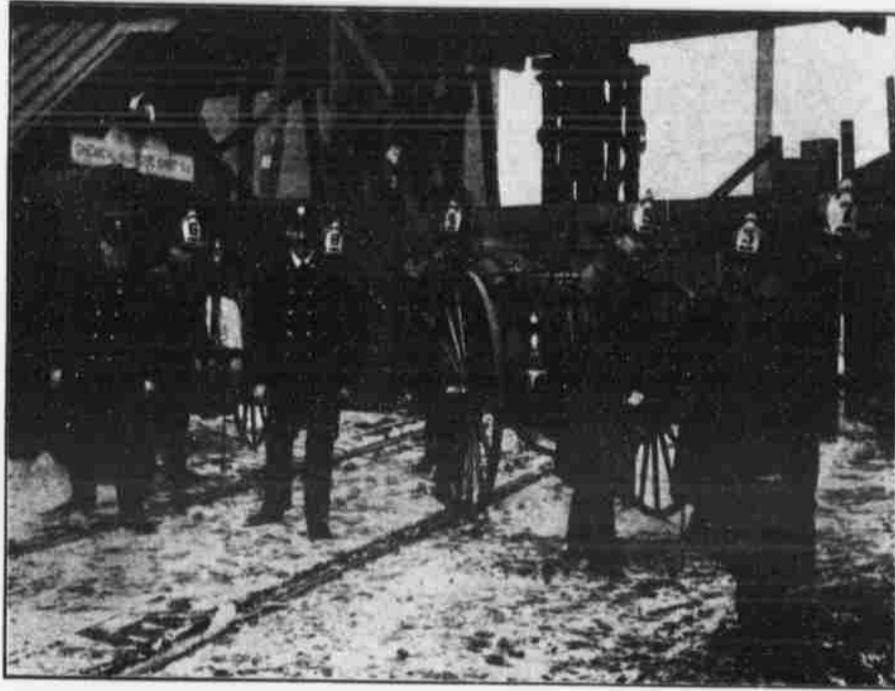
DUNDEE VOLUNTEERS MAKING A RUN—Photo by a Staff Artist.



HAMMOND MEN PREPARED TO RUN—Photo by a Staff Artist.



SLEEPING QUARTERS AT CUDAHY'S—Photo by a Staff Artist.



SWIFT'S FIREMEN WITH CHEMICAL ENGINE—Photo by a Staff Artist.

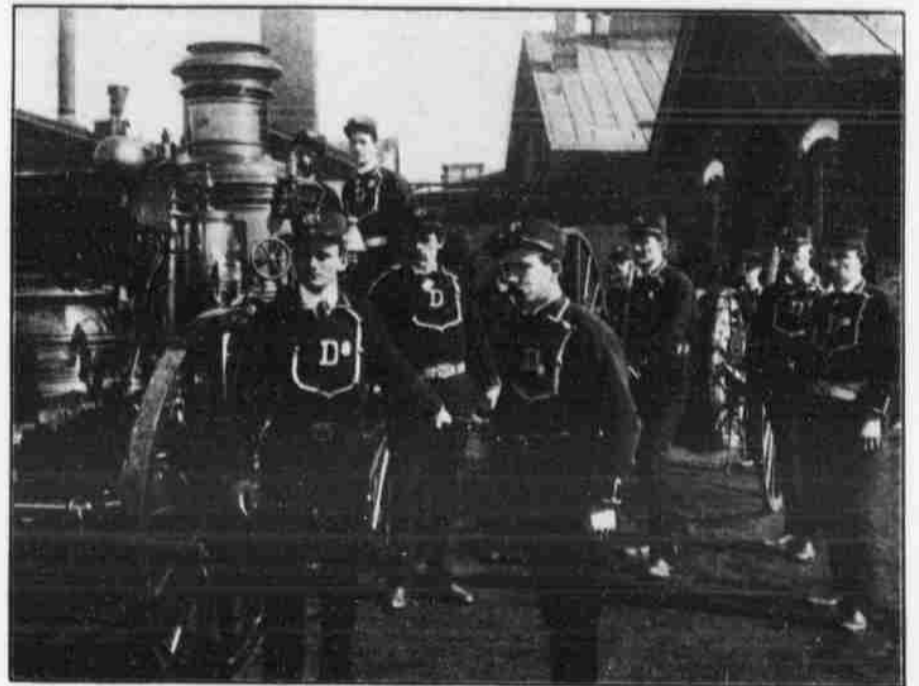
are provided eighteen Babcock fire extinguishers; thirty barrels always kept full of water at as many carefully selected points; sixteen two-way and three three-way water plugs, in all of which there is a gravity pressure of 125 pounds to the square inch. Practice drills are given every two weeks, and occasional false alarms in order to increase vigilance. On a recent occasion the members of the company, starting from the engine house, ran one block, laid 550 feet of hose and were throwing water in forty-seven seconds. The company is subject to call by the city department. An instance where valuable aid was rendered was the fire in Dietz's lumber yard. Insurance men only recently inspected the fire equipment and expressed lively approval of it.

The Union Pacific company is now organizing a similar department at the Council Bluffs transfer.

Among the Packing Houses.

In South Omaha all the meat packing houses have separate fire organization, the Armour, Swift, Cudahy, Hammond and Omaha Packing companies, and also the Union Stock Yards company. These organizations all act in perfect harmony, responding to calls originating in any of the packing houses or in the stock yards. They also respond to calls for aid from the South Omaha department. Each of these auxiliary companies has separate quarters, where the members stay when not at work. Baths and various amusements are provided by the companies. Armour and Swift pay the members of their departments 25 cents a day extra. Medical attendance is free. The chiefs of the several departments, together with Chief Etter of the South Omaha department, have meetings on the first Monday of every month, at which methods and higher efficiency are discussed.

The general signal in each of the packing houses is six blasts of the steam whistle. If afterward a double similar signal is sounded, it is a general alarm, and all the packing house fire companies respond, thus making available about fifty men and such additional equipment as can be used to advantage. The discipline governing such an assembling of the fire departments is arranged and thoroughly understood by all the firemen. In addition to either single or general alarms, the South Omaha city de-



DURANT ENGINE, HOSE AND ENGINE COMPANY OF UNION PACIFIC SHOPS—Photo by a Staff Artist.

WHILE Omaha's fire department ranks with that of any city in the United States, in equipment, discipline and high character and efficiency of its members, it is a notable and perhaps almost unique fact that there are a number of auxiliary fire-fighting organizations, regularly composed, subject to careful discipline and always responsive to emergency calls outside of the limits which are within their special care. Of course this obligation is reciprocal, the regular public fire department being responsive in like manner, with the qualification that once at a fire the city department assumes charge, the auxiliary organizations becoming subject to its control and direction.

The oldest auxiliary department in the city, the efficiency of which is constantly being increased, is the Durant Engine and Hose company, organized in 1856, soon after the completion of the Union Pacific railway. The members are all employees of the Union Pacific company, engaged in the various de-

partments of the company's shops. This fire company was named after Thomas C. Durant, the railway company's first chief engineer.

John Reed, who won the state hose-coupling contest in 1886, is chief of the department and receives extra pay. He has one assistant and twenty men. The services of the men are rewarded by the company in various substantial ways, among others payment of double time when engaged in fire work. The equipment of the Durant company consists of one engine having a capacity of 750 gallons a minute. There are four hose carts, carrying an aggregate of 2,150 feet of hose, this being in addition to permanently adjusted hose in all parts of the shops ready for instant use. Besides two city fire alarm boxes there are fifteen special boxes in the shops and also a telephone service.

The central alarm is in the machine shop and the members of the company are notified from that point. In addition to this general equipment there

partment is notified and the city chief takes general charge on reaching the fire.

Evidence of the promptness with which the auxiliary departments respond to an alarm was afforded last October, when at the Armour plant nine lines of hose were playing on a fire in the fertilizer department nine minutes before the arrival of the city department. There were only two fires of consequence last year, and none this year.

The equipment of these several companies that is available at a fire in any of the plants represents an aggregate of 54,000 feet of hose (not including hose, with nozzles, attached to water plugs in the buildings), and 282 chemical engines. Several of the plants are provided with a steam system.

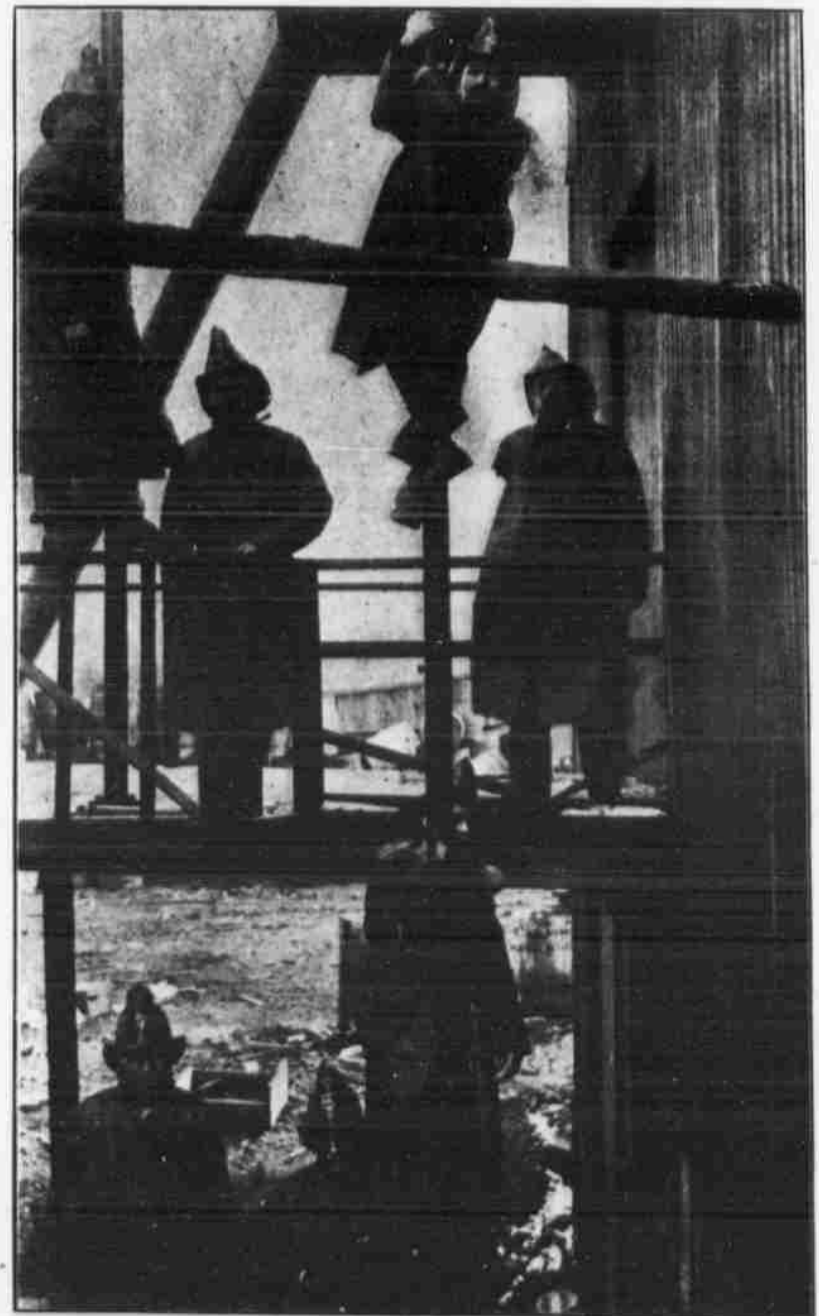
The village of Dundee, just outside the western limits of Omaha, has a volunteer department, and co-operating with it whenever needed are the two city fire companies

on Walnut Hill and at Thirty-sixth and Jackson streets. The Dundee company is provided with two hose carts and 1,100 feet of hose. There are six water plugs, with triple openings, supplied by one 12-inch and a number of 8-inch water mains, affording a pressure of fifty-four pounds. The distribution of the water plugs and the hose now provided admits of every house in the village being reached. There are two volunteer companies, each having a captain and twelve men.

The Pioneer Hook and Ladder company (volunteer) to whose members Omaha was indebted on numerous occasions for skillful protection for many years, was formally disbanded May 5, 1885, with elaborate public ceremonies. With their disbandment a glorious record was closed. Interest in the surviving members is preserved by the Veteran Firemen's association, to which all who were members of volunteer companies are eligible to membership.



ARMOUR'S DEPARTMENT GIVES AN EXHIBITION OF EFFICIENCY IN ANSWER TO A TEST CALL—Photo by a Staff Artist.



FIREMEN COMING DOWN A SLIDING POLE FROM THEIR WORK TO ANSWER AN ALARM—Photo by a Staff Artist.



OMAHA PACKING COMPANY'S TEAM TURNS ON THE HOSE IN A DRILL TEST—Photo by a Staff Artist.