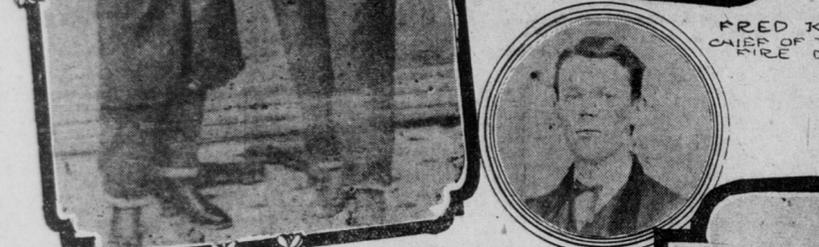


For 33 Years Chief of the Alameda Fire Department

Fred K. Krauth celebrates his unique anniversary today and recalls famous Rincon Hose Co. No. 6, of San Francisco, of which he was a charter member in 1864.

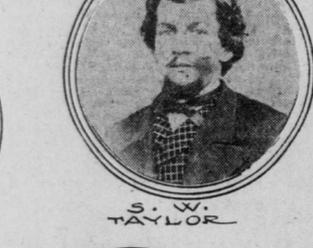


FRED K. KRAUTH JR. AND THOMAS F. CASEY 1866

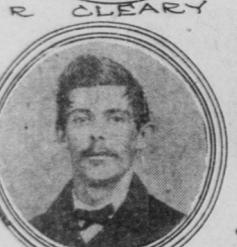
FRED K. KRAUTH



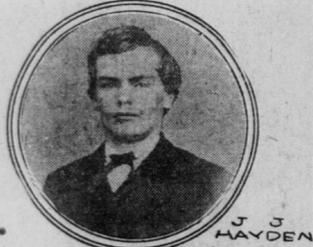
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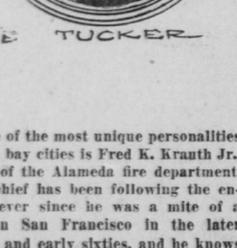
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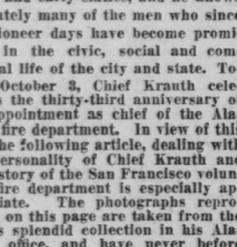
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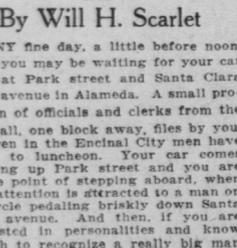
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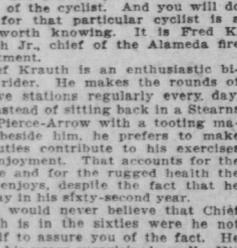
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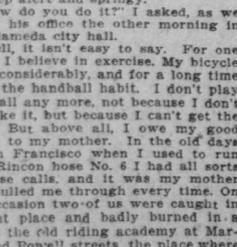
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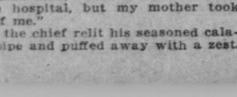
E. DESMOND



T. F. CASEY



C. HAGGARTY



W. BRODIE

FRED K. KRAUTH, CHIEF OF THE ALAMEDA FIRE DEPARTMENT

FIRE HOUSE, HOSE CART AND MEMBERS OF RINCON HOSE COMPANY NO. 6 IN 1864



THE RINCON HOSE NO. 6



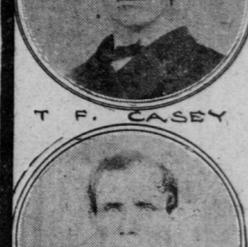
S. DUNKER



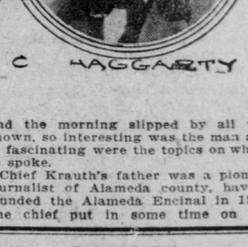
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T. F. CASEY



C. HAGGARTY



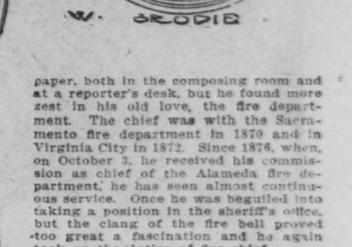
FRED K. KRAUTH JR. AND THOMAS F. CASEY 1904



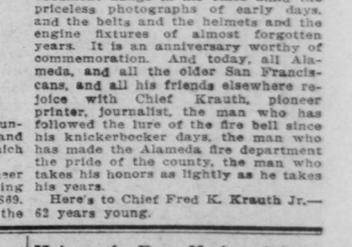
H. RYDER



E. DESMOND



T. F. CASEY



C. HAGGARTY

One of the most unique personalities in the bay cities is Fred K. Krauth Jr., chief of the Alameda fire department. The chief has been following the engine ever since he was a mite of a boy in San Francisco in the later fifties and early sixties, and he knows intimately many of the men who since the pioneer days have become prominent in the civic, social and commercial life of the city and state. Today, October 3, Chief Krauth celebrates the thirty-third anniversary of his appointment as chief of the Alameda fire department. In view of this fact the following article, dealing with the personality of Chief Krauth and the history of the San Francisco volunteer fire department is especially appropriate. The photographs reproduced on this page are taken from the chief's splendid collection in his Alameda office, and have never before been published.

By Will H. Scarlet

ANY fine day, a little before noon, you may be waiting for your car at Park street and Santa Clara avenue in Alameda. A small procession of officials and clerks from the city hall, one block away, flies by you, for even in the Emerald City men have to go to luncheon. Your car comes clanking up Park street and you are on the point of stepping aboard, when your attention is attracted to a man on a bicycle pedaling briskly down Santa Clara avenue. And then, if you are interested in personalities and know enough to recognize a really big man when you see one, you will let your car go and discreetly follow the movements of the cyclist. And you will do well, for that particular cyclist is a man worth knowing. It is Fred K. Krauth Jr., chief of the Alameda fire department.

Chief Krauth is an enthusiastic bicycle rider. He makes the rounds of his five stations regularly every day, and instead of sitting back in a Stearns or a Pierce-Arrow with a tooting mahout beside him, he prefers to make his duties contribute to his exercise and enjoyment. That accounts for the bicycle and for the rugged health the chief enjoys, despite the fact that he is today in his sixty-second year. You would never believe that Chief Krauth is in the sixties were he not himself to assure you of the fact. He wears his years surprisingly well. His complexion is fresh, his eyes are clear, his step alert and springy. "How do you do it?" I asked, as we sat in his office the other morning in the Alameda city hall. "Well, it isn't easy to say. For one thing, I believe in exercise. My bicycle helps considerably, and for a long time I had the handball habit. I don't play handball any more, not because I don't feel like it, but because I can't get the time. But above all, I owe my good health to my mother. In the old days in San Francisco when I used to run with Rincon hose No. 6 I had all sorts of close calls, and it was my mother that pulled me through every time. On one occasion two of us were caught in a tight place and badly burned in a fire at the old riding academy at Market and Powell streets, the place where the Baldwin afterward stood. The other man died, I didn't. We were taken to the hospital, but my mother took care of me. And the chief relit his seasoned calash pipe and puffed away with a zest.

Chief Krauth was born in New York city March 21, 1848. Many bright men come from New York, and the brighter they are the quicker they come. That Fred Krauth is not lacking in brilliancy may be inferred from the fact that he was living in San Francisco while the gold fever microbe was still in the air. As a youngster he developed a strong liking for running to fires—and in those days there were enough fires here to satisfy almost any boy—and while yet in his teens became a member of the volunteer fire department.

That volunteer fire department has a history that deserves to live. The members were volunteers in the strictest sense of the word, most of them even paying their dues for the privilege of wearing the heavy helmet and the flashing red shirt. To be a fireman in those days was glory indeed. But it was more than glory. It meant hard work and endless trouble and the bright face of danger. When the alarm rang out the volunteer nearest the engine house started out the machine; they had nothing but hand engines in those days—and in two and three the firemen came running, gripped the ropes and went prancing along over the cobbles. Sometimes they traveled far. Sometimes they came back soaked to the skin and footsore and weary. But they liked the job, and the city liked them. Some men who afterward became prominent in the civic and social business life of the city were members of the old volunteer fire department. Senator David C. Broderick was foreman of Empire engine No. 1; David Scannell, first elected in 1860, was for more than a quarter of a century chief engineer, and the roll of honored "ex-emptis" includes the names of Claus Spreckels, former chief of Police L. W. Lees, David A. Finn, Samuel Newman, Martin Kelly, Phipps Bunker, Edward T. Anthony, John C. Roberts, James Corbett, James E. Britt, the father of Jimmy and Willis; W. J. Harrington, Henry Kohn, Daniel D. Hayes, James O'Donnell, James O'Callaghan, Major Stratman and Colonel A. A. Andrews. Empire engine No. 1, the first of the three original companies of 1849, was for a long time among the most energetic companies of the volunteer fire department. After the tragic death of Senator Broderick its first foreman, it was called the Broderick company in his honor. The engine house was in Sacramento street above Kearny.

Knickbocker 5 and Monumental 6 were companies composed of New Yorkers and Baltimoreans respectively. Keen rivalry existed between these two companies, and usually, when the alarm came, the wise ones among the spectators lined up to watch the race from the Knickerbocker's stronghold at Sacramento and Sansome streets and the Monumental's engine house opposite Portsmouth square. Other engine companies of the sixties were: Manhattan 2, Jackson street between Montgomery and Kearny; Howard 3, California street near Sansome; California 4, Market street opposite the Oriental hotel below Battery street;

Volunteer 7, Pine street below Montgomery; Pacific 8, better known as "Sailor 8," Front street between Jackson and Pacific; Vigilant 9, Stockton street near Broadway; Crescent 10, Pacific street near Kearny; Columbian 11, Bush street above Kearny; Pennsylvania 12, Jackson street between Kearny and Dupont; Young America 13, near the old Mission Dolores church in Sixteenth street; Tiger 14, to which the late Claus Spreckels belonged. Second street between Natoma and Howard; Gibraltar 15, situated near the sugar refinery, and West End 16, on Russian hill.

The history of Rincon Hose No. 6, of which company Chief Krauth was president, is of more than ordinary interest. The headquarters were at Beale and Folsom streets, and the entire city was its field of operation. The company was formed in November, 1863, and went into service April 2, 1864. While the headquarters were at Beale and Folsom streets, and the entire city was its field of operation, the company was formed in November, 1863, and went into service April 2, 1864. While the headquarters were at Beale and Folsom streets, and the entire city was its field of operation, the company was formed in November, 1863, and went into service April 2, 1864.

One of the best known members of Rincon Hose 6 is Thomas F. Casey, for years wharfinger here and a man with a host of friends in almost every city on the coast. He and Chief Krauth were chums as boys, and they are not less chums today. When the volunteer fire department went out of commission in San Francisco in 1867, the hose cart belonging to Rincon 6 was sold to a volunteer fire department in Portland, Ore. Chief Krauth and his friend, Casey, visited the Lewis and Clark exposition in the City of Roses in 1905 and took it into their heads to look up the old hose cart, which, in the years gone by, they dragged to so many fires. They found that it had been sold to a fire company at The Dalles. So up the Columbia they went to find that the pride of Rincon 6

has been superseded by a more modern machine. A careful search in the basement of The Dalles engine house brought to light some precious relics of the old cart, including one of the brass bells that decorated the front of the machine. The bell was in fragments, but Krauth brought it home and had it cemented together and mounted by G. Mattheis, engineer of Engine 1, Alameda.

Mattheis was a little dubious about undertaking the task. "I'm sure all the pieces aren't there," he said. "I'm sure they are," declared Chief Krauth. "For I put them together before leaving Oregon. All you have to do is put them together again and cement them. Get to work on the puzzle."

The engineer got to work and kept at work with excellent results. Today the old bell, a veritable liberty bell in more ways than one, reposes on the chief's desk in the Alameda city hall. That liberty bell is by no means the only relic of the old fire department that Chief Krauth possesses. All around the room are helmets and fronts and belts and engine fixtures, each one with a fascinating history of its own. On the wall opposite the chief's chair is a helmet front bearing this inscription: HARRY HOWARD, HOSE 55 OF NEW YORK, to RINCON HOSE 6 OF SAN FRANCISCO. The front, a beautifully executed ornament, was presented by the New York hose company in 1864. When Rincon hose went out of commission three years later, the presentation front was lost sight of. Then, in the early eighties a member of the old company heard that it decorated the wall in a Barbary coast dance hall, he invaded the dance hall and offered to buy the front. The proprietor, a gentleman from over the Rhine, refused to sell. The fireman pressed his suit, but all in vain. Then he broke loose. "Look here, that front belongs to Rincon hose No. 6. If you don't hand it over right off I'll have the crowd down here in a jiffy and they'll clean out this joint in style." "The proprietor looked anxious. 'The crowd? What crowd?' " "Tom Casey's crowd; and if—"

The proprietor hastily jumped up on a chair and took down the front and thrust it out to the fireman. "Here, quick! Tom Casey's crowd, did you say? Mine God, take it away!" Replete with anecdotes of early days in San Francisco, Chief Krauth sat back and smoked and smiled and talked.

And the morning slipped by all unknown, so interesting was the man and so fascinating were the topics on which he spoke. Chief Krauth's father was a pioneer journalist of Alameda county, having founded the Alameda Enquirer in 1849. The chief put in some time on the

paper, both in the composing room and at a reporter's desk, but he found more zest in his old love, the fire department. The chief was with the Sacramento fire department in 1870 and in Virginia City in 1872. Since 1878, when, on October 3, he received his commission as chief of the Alameda fire department, he has seen almost continuous service. Once he was beguiled into taking a position in the sheriff's office, but the clang of the fire bell proved too great a fascination and he again took up the duties of fire chief. Thirty-three years ago today, October 3, Fred K. Krauth Jr. received his commission as chief. The time stained document hangs in his office amid the priceless photographs of early days, and the belts and the helmets and the engine fixtures of almost forgotten years. It is an anniversary worthy of commemoration. And today, all Alameda, and all the older San Franciscans, and all his friends elsewhere rejoice with Chief Krauth, pioneer printer, journalist, the man who has followed the lure of the fire bell since his knickerbocker days, the man who has made the Alameda fire department the pride of the county, the man who takes his honors as lightly as he takes his years. Here's to Chief Fred K. Krauth Jr.—62 years young.

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