

**HISTORICAL RECORD OF NAMEAUG
ENGINE CO., TOGETHER WITH AN
ORIGINAL POEM, READ AT THE RE-
UNION, FEBRUARY 22ND, 1871, ALSO, A
LIST OF ITS MEMBERS, FROM ITS
ORGANIZATION TO THE PRESENT TIME**

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Historical Record of Nameaug Engine Co., Together with an Original Poem, Read at the Re-Union, February 22nd, 1871, Also, a List of Its Members, from Its Organization to the Present Time by John Gordon & Oscar F. Hewitt

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NEW LONDON:
STARR AND FARNHAM, PRINTERS.
1871.

HISTORICAL RECORD
OF
NAMEAUG ENGINE COMPANY.

Your committee on the history of this Company approached their duties deeply impressed with the belief of their inability to do justice to the subject. The history of the Nameaug Company, extending over twenty years, has taken volumes to record. It will be the duty of your committee to cull from these records prominent incidents calculated to bring back remembrances of the good old times.

The first written records of this Company to be found are dated August 6th, 1849; but it is supposed by many, and some of the old inhabitants assert that the organization existed many years previous to this date. As reliable historians we will discard tradition and confine ourselves to the written records. At the above date the organization existed as Reliance No. 5. We will give in full the record of the annual election at that date.

STATION HOUSE, ()
August 6th, 1849. ()

Company met at 8 o'clock, P. M.; after collection of fines and dues, the Company proceeded (it being the annual meeting) to choice of officers, which resulted as follows, viz: F. L. ALLEN, Foreman, H. E. WEST, 1st Assistant, A. W. GALLAER, 2nd Assistant, C. G. SISTARE, Secretary. The following new members were then proposed and elected; William H. Barns, Jonathan Starr, Jr., William Read, Patrick Kelley. Miscellaneous business being in order, it was moved and seconded that the leading committee consist hereafter of ten, and that they hold their office one year; that they be taken from the head of the list of members, following every year in succession; passed. B. S. Beckwith, D. A. Pollock, Thomas Edgar, George E. Starr, John A. Comstock, were chosen suction hose committee. No further business, Company adjourned.

CHAS. G. SISTARE, Sec.

The ambitious spirits that composed Reliance No. 5, seem to have been dissatisfied with their machine, for we find that at a meeting on September 9th, 1849, the Company voted to have a new Engine, provided funds could be raised for the purpose, and that B. S. Beckwith and others be a committee to confer with eminent builders with regard to the expense of a first class machine. The Company having concluded to purchase a new machine at an expense of \$1500, offered their services to the city with the understanding that the city should furnish them a suitable building and hose. This was recommended by the Common Council to a city meeting and voted down. At the next meeting, October 12th, we find the Company voting F. L. Allen, the Foreman; a committee to hand over the keys of the house, and deliver over the public property entrusted to the Company, to the Chief Engineer. At the same meeting they resolved to continue the organization under the name of Independent Blues. We here give the names of those composing the company of Independent Blues, not on account of their connection with that organization, but because they were the fathers of the grand old Naumcang Company.

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| F. L. Allen, | S. Warren, | G. R. Warren, |
| H. E. West, | O. R. Dobbs, | F. Tracy, |
| A. W. Gallae, | A. T. Burgess, | R. Chappell, |
| C. G. Sistare, | T. Edgar, | S. Smith, |
| W. O. Irish, | B. S. Beckwith, | N. Lanpheer, |
| J. T. Ames, | W. T. Strickland, | J. H. Allyn, |
| J. L. Hickox, | G. N. Woodward, | W. H. Barnes, |
| W. H. Lewis, | H. Miller, | W. Reed, |
| G. D. Shepard, | H. P. Horton, | J. Starr, Jr., |
| D. Pratt, | G. E. Starr, | P. Kelley, |
| F. A. Bassett, | F. H. Bacon, | J. L. Lyon, |
| C. S. Beckwith, | C. Ballser, | J. W. Cockran, |
| J. Haff, | W. Golden, | W. Dickinson, |
| W. B. Tate, | F. Preston, | H. Mather, |
| E. B. Chipman, | C. H. Miner, | W. Bartle, |
| J. A. Comstock, | C. M. Gorham, | J. Isham, |
| J. S. Hadley, | W. H. Rowe, | W. N. Miner, |
| D. A. Pollock, | W. R. Crosby, | |

We find at their next meeting, in Lawrence building, where nothing daunted by their treatment at the city meeting, they voted to have a first class Engine, and appointed a committee consisting of F. L. Allen, W. H. Barns and others to procure the same. At a subsequent meeting we find the name for the new machine, NAMEAUG, unanimously adopted. We next, at a meeting of the Company January 7th, 1850, find them making arrangements for their first annual grand ball to come off at the City Hotel; F. L. Allen, Wm. H. Barns, and Wm. B. Tate a committee to manage the same. At their next meeting they voted to leave their quarters in Lawrence building, and hire the building south of John Darrow's on Main Street, for their new engine house. At a meeting on April 18th, 1850, they concluded to drop the name of Independent Blues, and adopt that of NAMEAUG ENGINE COMPANY.

The Company having procured their new Engine, manufactured by Jeffers of Rhode Island, and taken possession of their new house, again offered their services to the city authorities, which services were accepted, and well they might be, for no such powerful machine or efficient company existed in the State at that time. On the 1st of May, 1850, the mournful duty devolved on the Company of depositing in the tomb the remains of one of their number, Frederic A. Bassett. This was the first inroad that death had made in the ranks of the Company; it was indeed a solemn occasion, for the deceased had been one of their most genial companions.

On the 4th of July of this year, the Company met at 9 A. M., to receive Hudson Engine No. 1, of Norwich, and after marching in procession through the principal streets, took their guests to the Federal Street House where they partook of a splendid collation; they separated about 12 P. M., (in the language of the record) and so ended the celebration of a day which unborn generations will celebrate. On October 7th, 1850, the Company held their annual meeting, when F. L. Allen was re-elected Foreman, with the same officers except Wm. H. Barns, Secretary, in place of Charles G. Sistare. On the 9th of the month the Company were called out to extinguish a fire at the house of Martin Coates in Prison Street; on November 26th the Company were called out and found Williams & Barns' store on Water Street on fire; put on two

streams and soon extinguished the flames. At a meeting December 2nd, William H. Lewis was elected Second Assistant in place of A. W. Gallcar, who was about to remove to California.

On the 12th of February the Company held their annual ball which was a success, and the profits which were considerable were paid into the treasury. Being invited by the Mayor of Hartford to attend the celebration of the 4th of July, 1851, at that place, the Company met at the house at 3 1-2 A. M., and amid a tempest of thunder, rain and lightning, embarked on the steamer Cricket at 5 o'clock, A. M., sailed up the beautiful Connecticut and created quite a sensation in Hartford—were handsomely treated, arrived home and closed the celebration by a dance at the City Hotel. On the 2nd of September the Company received as guests the Rhode Island Company, showed them the usual civilities, marched them through the principal streets of the city amid a deluge of rain; next day took them to Groton, and then escorted them to the place of embarkation. The Nameaug on this occasion turned out with white pants.

Annual meeting October 6th, 1851. F. L. Allen and the same officers re-elected. November 3rd Mr. Lewis 2nd Assistant leaving for California, Albert T. Burgess was elected in his place. February 2nd, 1852, the Company's annual ball passed off in the usual style, putting \$150 into the treasury. On the 5th of July came out in procession, Engine drawn by four black horses, and adorned with an immense eagle on the top of machine. Heard an oration from Hon. Anson Burlingame; adjourned to City Hotel to an elegant repast, and was disturbed in the midst of it by an alarm of fire, which proved to be a pile of wood on the Railroad bridge. The Nameaug was on the spot promptly.

At the fourth annual meeting October 4th, 1852, F. L. Allen was re-elected Foreman, with the same officers. On the 6th of December the Company were called out, the Union House being in flames in the upper part; after some hard work the flames were extinguished and the machine rolled home. December 23rd extinguished fire in Union store corner Bank and Golden streets. The Company's annual ball took place on the 3rd of February with the usual success. March 7th, called

out to fire on the Neck, when some cars, freight house, and ice houses were destroyed. Nameaug first stream on the fire as usual. Friday, July 22nd, went to New Haven by invitation of the authorities of that city; were handsomely received by the Sixes of New Haven, marched through the principal streets of the city, accompanied by Joe Green's band, kindly assisted by the Nail Factory band of Guilford; played for prize with the other engines present, but unfortunately burst leading hose. The next day, the records say, the Company marched steadily up Chapel street to the Depot, with the band at their head; there can be no doubt that the Company marched steadily up Chapel street, because the records are particular to say they did. Arriving at home the Company formed four deep and marched to the house.

Saturday, November 13th, 1852, Company called out to the funeral of their lamented comrade, Thomas Barus. Rolled the machine out in front of the house, appropriately draped in the habiliments of mourning; accompanied the remains of our deceased friend to the Cemetery; the many recollections of the noble and manly character of the deceased, was visibly impressed upon every face.

October 3rd, 1853, annual meeting, F. L. Allen was re-elected Foreman, and same officers. At this meeting the Company petitioned the city authorities for a new house. The Company turned out at 6 1-2 o'clock November 10th to fill gas-work cistern; this proved a serious business and did not pay for the powder. Nov. 18th, the old Methodist church on fire and the building destroyed; adjoining buildings saved. As usual, Nameaug first machine on the ground, and as usual, George E. Starr first man at the house. Mr. William Miner was badly burned at this fire. December 5th, 1853, Company met and voted that Joe Green was a brick. February 6th the annual ball again passed with its usual brilliancy, leaving a handsome balance for the treasury. March 6th. Company meet at this time at Beckwith's wharf on Water street, and continued to meet there until their new building was finished. May 7th, Company called out to fire in Burdick's stables in Bradley street; the building was destroyed but the adjoining property saved. August 15th, 1854, the Company rolled their machine to her new home in Masonic street. This invincible

Company now had the best house and the best machine in the State; the house was thrown open to the inspection of visitors who were all thoroughly impressed with its magnificence.

Sixth annual meeting October 2nd, 1853. F. L. Allen re-elected Foreman, with the same officers. About this time the Company inaugurated a series of dances in the new house, which were very successful. November 8th, 1854, called out at 3 A. M.; Union House on fire and totally destroyed, adjoining buildings saved. This was one of the worst fires that ever occurred in the city. The Foreman was a boarder in the house, and narrowly escaped with his wife and child, losing \$400 in money, gold watches and other property. John T. Ames a member of the Company, lost all his personal effects. December 28th, an alarm of fire; Culver's dry goods store and Dr. Perine's dentist shop were on fire, but it was easily subdued. January 1st, 1855; at a meeting of the Company at this date, the Secretary in behalf of the Company presented the Foreman with an elegant gold watch in lieu of the one lost at the Union House fire; this watch was furnished by one of the Company. February 3rd; again the annual ball was a grand success, putting into the treasury \$334. September 15th, the Company attended the funeral of Thomas W. Williams, 2nd, who was an honorary member.

October 1st, 1855, annual meeting for election of officers; F. L. Allen, Foreman, and same officers elected. December 12th, extinguished a fire in Stayner's cabinet shop in Golden street. January 10th, 1856—it being leap year—the ladies gave a grand dance, of which the Secretary at the time speaks in the most gushing terms. February 26th, went to Norwich to deposit the remains of George H. Webb a member of the Company, in their last resting place. March 21st, the annual ball came off in the usual brilliant style, resulting in a profit to the Company of over \$200. On May 15th the Company was ordered out for practice by the Chief Engineer, the feature of the occasion was that Nos. 2 and 3 took positions at the foot of the Flag Staff, and we leading a stream into each through a hundred feet of hose. The Chief desired all three Engines to play ten minutes and see if we could wash them, or in the classic language of the Secretary, they suck us. We played two and a half minutes and flooded them; limbered up and rolled to the