

October 23, 1896 – CHESTER TIMES

FIREMEN'S NIGHT OUT – Ridley Park Brilliant with Pyrotechnics and Gay with Paraders – Several Hundred In Line – The Spectacle Admired by Visitors from Many Parts of the County – The Housing Ceremonies, Route, Formation and all the Participants

Ridley Park never was a scene of greater animation, was never attended by a bigger crowd of stalwart, brave hearted men, than last evening on the occasion of the formal housing of the apparatus of Ridley Park Fire Company No. 1, in the beautiful and commodious quarters recently erected and provided in the new Borough Hall.

Firemen were present from every part of the county, some traveling by train, others by trolley, and not a few by the good old-fashioned mode, walking. Nearly all the various companies were uniformed and were accompanied by their respective bands and as they marched into the precincts of the Park, from different quarters the scene waxed more and more inspiring.

The Borough itself did honor to the occasion by putting on its gala attire, nearly every house and lawn being brightly illuminated with Chinese lanterns, while flags and bunting streamed from every available point. Fireworks were also plentifully in evidence and about 700 firemen lined up for the parade and there were hundreds of visitors present besides the turnout of almost every person in the Park.

W. A. Macan was Chief Marshal, and he was ably assisted by George F. Stackhouse and John Buchanan, all being well mounted.

Each visiting company also had its own marshal and his assistants and each furnished two members as a housing committee, so that everything had been arranged in apple pie order, and was carried out to the letter.

ROUTE AND FORMATION – THE LINE WAS FORMED ON Swarthmore Avenue with the right resting on Darby Street and the following route was paraded: out Swarthmore Avenue to Darby Street to South Park Street to Morton Avenue to Ridley Avenue to Tasker Street; counter march, Ridley Avenue to Free Street to Ward Avenue to Swarthmore Avenue to Hinckley Avenue to Sellers Avenue to Pike to Myrtle Street to Henderson Avenue to Rosemont Avenue to Pike to Morton Avenue to Hinckley Avenue to Swarthmore Avenue to Felton Avenue to Dutton Street to Fire House.

The line-up of the ladies was as follows: Franklin of Chester, 100 strong, accompanied by the Friendship Band. Dell M. Robb was Chief Marshal with E. Stanton Burk and John Schiagel as assistants. They had their fine Silsby engine and their prize parade hose carriage, and a nobby turnout did they make at the head of the parade.

Hanley Hose Company of Chester, eighty-six strong and accompanied by Oglesby's Band. His Honor, Mayor Black was Chief Marshal assisted by Joseph H. Hicksen, Esq. and William Morrison. They had no apparatus but made a splendid showing ex-chief of the Chester Fire Department John Booth, being a member.

The Moyamensing Hook and Ladder Company of Chester were forty strong and were marshalled by Irving E. Baker, assisted by John Dolan and Thomas M. Devers. The boys were not uniformed but all wore badges.

The Felton of South Chester were sixty strong and had along their line hose carriage. They were accompanied by Doherty's Band and were marshalled by Thomas Frame with Charles Grawl and Lewis Moore as assistants.

The Morton Company, sixty in line, were accompanied by their own band of twenty pieces, Frank Strickland was Chief Marshal assisted by Squire Richard Young. George Johnson, and W.H. Much. They had their line combined chemical and water engine.

The Media ladies were 100 strong, sixty of them being in full uniform and were accompanied by the Media Band of 25 pieces. Their foreman, J. Harris Sloan, was Chief Marshal and he was ably assisted by W.F. Worrall. They had their new \$1100 hose carriage drawn by a pair of beautiful cream ponies.

The Good Will of Chester had fifty in line and were headed by the Keystone Band. They had no apparatus but made a good showing. Howard Seth was Chief Marshal assisted by Herman Dickerson.

The Prospect Park Company was sixty strong and had the Excelsior Band of Philadelphia in attendance. They had their parade carriage and those who hauled it all carried lighted lanterns. Andrew McGinn was Chief Marshall assisted by James McFall and John L. Stagg.

The Norwood Company had forty in line and were accompanied by the Morton Band. They had their hook and ladder with them, and were marshaled by Thomas F. Kreeger, Sr., assisted by F.W. Myers, Thomas B. Welch, Theodore Kreeger, Jr., W.M. Davidson, and Al Austin.

The Swarthmore Company were forty strong, and had their combined chemical and water engine. Charles Parker was Chief Marshal and he was assisted by Ryland Phillips and Henry Hufnal.

The Lansdowne Company were forty strong, and had along their hose and ladder wagon. Joseph Sowden was Chief Marshal with H.B. Stiles and Samuel Sowden as assistants.

The Rutledge Company had twenty five in line and had their truck with them. James Thompson was Chief Marshal and was assisted by John Irvin and Robert Hughes.

The Clifton Company had 25 in line, with George Foster as Chief Marshall and Henry Schrader, James Haynes and James Miskel as assistants.

The Ridley Park Company brought up the rear, sixty strong, and looked nobby in their new uniforms. They were accompanied by the Pennsylvania state Band of 15 pieces and had the mounted marshal above mentioned.

HOUSING THE APPARATUS— On the parade reaching the precincts of the fire house after the counter-march, the companies all opened ranks and the Ridley Park Company passed through to the house.

Here the apparatus of the company was housed by the following committee, consisting of two from each company present: Franklin, John Pace and Charles Myers; Hanley, Thomas H. Berry and Joseph N. Hinkson; Moya, John Dolan, James R. Bagshaw; Felton, H.D. Simcox, Olin T. Pancost; Morton, W.H. Munch, W.A. Mayland, Jr.; Media, Hon. Jesse M. Baker, Thomas J. Osborne; Good Will, Heston, McCray, Philip Oglesby; Prospect Park, W. Calhoun, Jr., George W.L. Butler; Norwood, W. Calhoun Sr., Theodore F. Kreeger, Sr.; Swarthmore, Charles Parker Ryland Phillips; Lansdowne, H.B. Stiles, Samuel Sowden; Rutledge, J.L. Scott, William Wiltham; Clifton Heights, James Foster, Timothy Wheelan.

Immediately preceding the housing the members of the Ridley Park Council with a few other officials, held the following brief service from the balcony of the hall:

Prayer was offered by R. Francis Clemens, Jr., pastor of the Ridley Park M.E. Church. After three hearty cheers, Rev. F. Swarts Crawford, pastor of the Ridley Park Presbyterian Church delivered a hearty speech of welcome to all the visitors. The H. H. Sawyer, president of

the Borough Council, formally presented the quarters and all apparatus to the Ridley Park Company.

NOTES ALONG THE ALONG – Jonathan L. Pennell, member of the Franklin Company, though in his 87<sup>th</sup> year, paraded at the head of the list.

Many of the marshals and others carried magnificent bouquets.

It was pleasant to see the gentlemanly way in which all the “ladies” saluted the home company, as they met during the counter march.

The Media contingent chartered three trolley cars, which were only just enough to hold them.

In the middle of the Ridley Park Company, were three carriages containing Burgess Kenney and the members of Borough Council.

The Swarthmore boys gave their yell several times and it sounded good.

Burgess Galloway of Prospect Park was as big a fireman as any of his mates.

Thomas Ewing, who was a former member of the Hanley Hose Company, but who has been absent about sixteen years, joined their ranks again last evening as a member.

Many remarked the profuse decorations and illuminations, especially around some of the large houses.

There were no lack of pretty girls present.

Bicyclists galore attended and paraded on their wheels.

Everybody was orderly and appeared to enjoy the event hugely.

Long live the Ridley Park Fire Company No. 1, and may their usefulness only be exceeded by their good looks.

There was some good music in line notably that of Oglesby's Band, which headed the Hanley delegation.

The Franklin's handsome steamer, drawn by four black horses, attracted much attention.

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