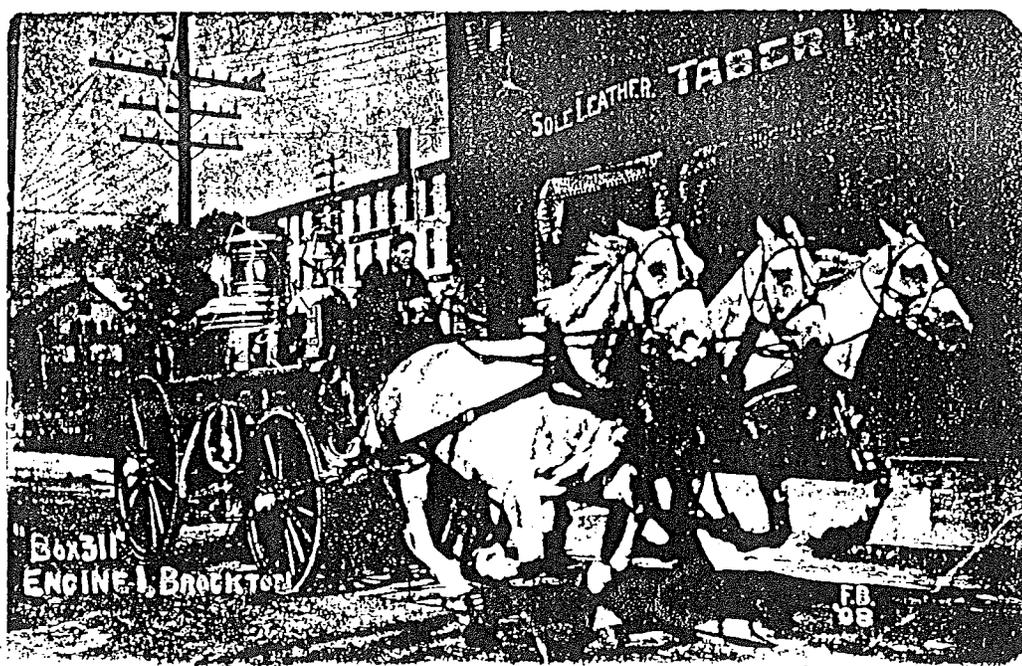


A History Of The
BROCKTON
Fire Department



150
Years of Service
1846 1996

A History of the Brockton Fire Department

The Brockton Fire Department can trace its history back to 1827. At the town meeting in that year it was decided that the growing town of North Bridgewater needed fire protection. At that time "fire protection" involved leather buckets for carrying water, for this town the protection buckets offered were not adequate. The need for modern fire protection took shape in the purchase of a new pumping engine. This was purchased with donations from the towns people and when delivered it was stored at the meeting house which stood on Main Street near the corner of Pleasant Street. This engine, named "Union No. 1" was a "bucket tub" which had to be filled with water by buckets. "Union No. 1" Served the town of North Bridgewater for nineteen years before being replaced by a more modern suction type hand tub.

The town appropriated \$1,000 toward the purchase of two new engines with the assistance of an equal donation from the citizens of North Bridgewater. The money was raised and the two new engines were built by T. & E. Thayer, at a cost of \$750 each. The remaining money was used to purchase additional equipment. The two new engines were suction engines rather than the out dated bucket tub. One engine, the "Enterprise No. 2", (motto: Always Ready) was stored in the Campello section of the town and the other tub, the "Protector No. 3", (motto: We will endeavor) was stored in the center village section.

In the meantime, before the two engines were delivered, the fire department was organized by an act of legislature on March 1, 1846.

During the next twenty five years there were many changes in the apparatus of North Bridgewater. In 1850, a new hand tub was purchased from John Agnew of Philadelphia for \$1,700 to replace the original "Protector" hand tub, with the old one renamed "Relief No. 4." Then, in that same year, the "Independence No. 4" was purchased and the "Relief No. 4" was sold to the town of Randolph. In the fall of 1853, the town purchased a new engine and it was named the "Colombian No. 5"(motto: On the alert) In 1854 a new hand tub was also purchased from the L. Button Co. to replace the hand tub of "Enterprise No. 2", with the old "Enterprise No. 2" relocated to Brockton Heights where it was renamed the "Niagara No. 6."

In 1861, the old "Protector No. 3" was traded for a Jeffers tub and was given the same name and number. This engine is still in the City of Brockton today and is housed at the Brockton Fire Museum.

In 1865, the "Niagara" hand tub, located at the Brockton Heights, was sold to South Easton when a new engine was purchased and named the "Hancock No. 1."

In 1879 the "Colombian No. 5" was taken out of service after twenty-six years of service, when it was replaced by Brockton's first steamer, an Amoskeag steamer which was placed in service in July of 1879. Thus ended the age of hand pumpers and began the age of steam for the Brockton Fire Department.

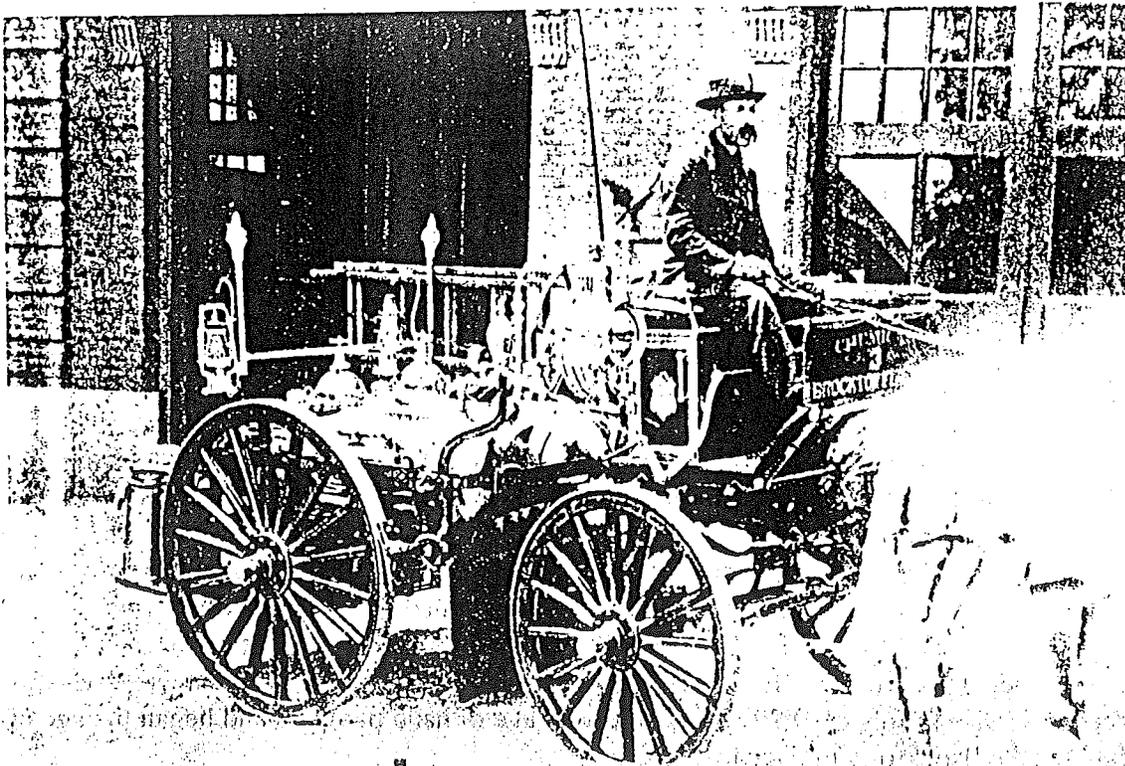
The Brockton Fire Department progressed to become a modern firefighting force over the next 10 years. In 1879, the purchase of the first steamer led to the purchase of

three more by 1887. The new steamers signaled the decommissioning of all but one of the hand pumpers, the "Hancock No. 1." At that time, the city possessed four steamers, two hose wagons, two hose reels, two hook and ladder trucks and one hand engine.

In 1885, the fire department included five permanent men and in 1886, under the command of Fire Chief Charles Eaton it was increased to seven permanent men. In 1887, the force included eight permanent men and one hundred and twenty three members in the call force.

In 1884, ground was broken for a new fire house on Pleasant Street in the center section of the city. The new fire house was lighted with electricity and in the event of an alarm at night, every electric lamp was automatically lit. This new and modern fire station, wired under the direction of Thomas A. Edison himself, was the first electrically lit fire station in America. When the citizens of the Campello section saw the new firehouse on Pleasant Street they wanted a similar one right away. A new Campello fire house with an attached police sub-station was built and then dedicated on Jan. 5, 1889. It included all the modern appliances found at the new central station.

The introduction of a Gamewell fire alarm system in 1879 included eight boxes and two strikers which were located at the Congregational Church in Campello and the Central Methodist Church. By 1887, the fire alarm system grew to include twenty-nine boxes and eighteen tappers & gongs. The tower striker atop the Central Methodist Church was relocated to the Central Fire Station on Pleasant Street. The bell atop the Congregational Church in Campello was discontinued on August 18, 1898 when it was replaced by a new bell weighing 2,000 pounds located in the tower at the new Campello Station .



Chemical No. 3
1891 - 1900

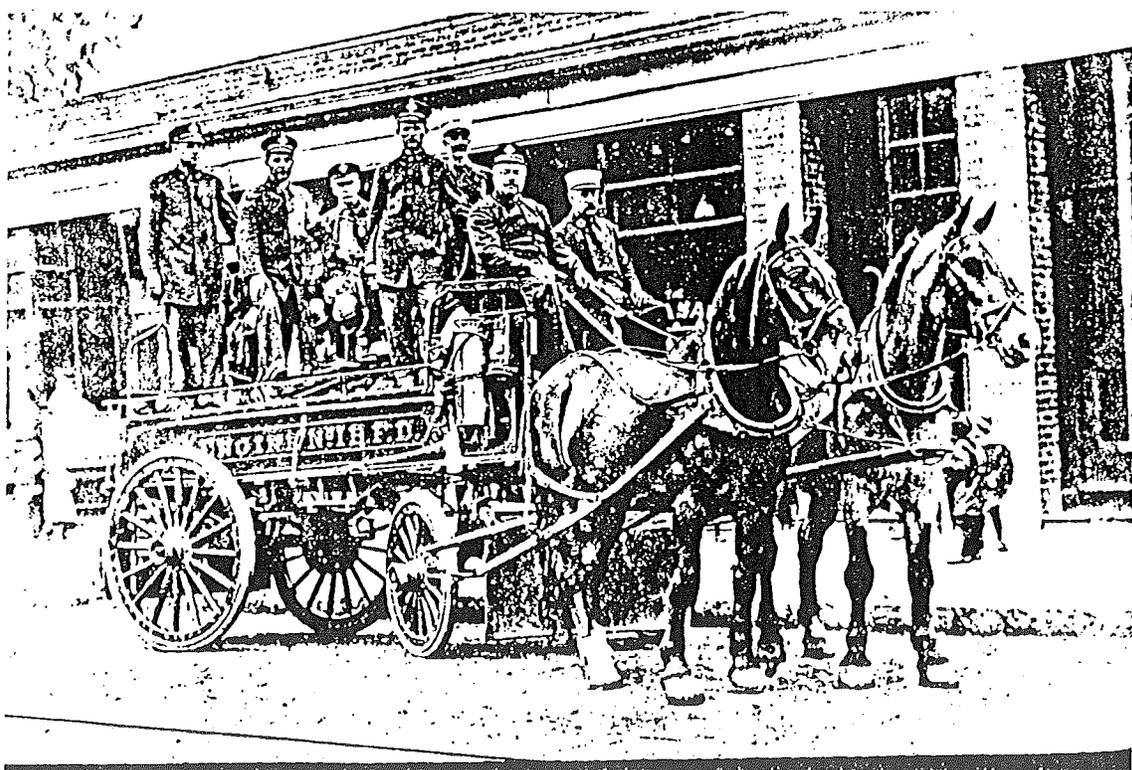
On September 9, 1895 The Board of Alderman voted to build a new fire station on the east side of the city. This action was approved by the City Council on September 12, 1895. On May 7, 1896 the new east side fire station located at the corner of Crescent and Lyman Streets opened.

On October 4, 1892, Mayor Keith appointed Chief Harry L. Marston the first permanent Chief of the Fire Department a position Chief Marston would hold until his retirement in 1916.

On March 28, 1899 property was purchased on North Montello Street, north of East Battles Street to be the site of a new fire station. The plans for the new building were drawn by a Brockton firefighter from the Montello Station. The new station, known as the Battles Street Station and designated Fire Station No. 5, opened on April 7, 1904.

In August of 1900, the Chief of the Fire Department and the Public Property Committee were instructed to locate a suitable site for a new fire station on the West Side of the city. A site was selected on the corner of Belmont and Boylston streets. When the new west side station was opened in August of 1907 and designated Station No. 6, it was deemed the most modern and up to date station in the city by the Public Property Committee.

A contract was signed between the Brockton Fire Department and The Westinghouse Co. for the purchase of a horse drawn gasoline powered pumping engine. This gasoline engine powered pump costing \$3,800 was the first gasoline powered fire engine sold in the United States. The new engine was delivered on September 12, 1908 and was located at the new West Side Fire Station, Station No. 6. The gasoline engine showed many advantages over the steamer, in that it required no time to work up steam, the water



Engine Co. 1 Hose Wagon
Circa 1896

pressure was constant, and the engine did not produce nearly the same amount of smoke as a steamer. This new engine signaled the beginning of the end of steam powered pumpers.

The future of the fire service in Brockton changed just one year later when the first motorized fire apparatus was delivered on September 23, 1909. The Flying Squadron was put into service at Station No. 1 under the name Squad A on Nov. 10, 1909. The crew wore red helmets and responded to all alarms of fire.

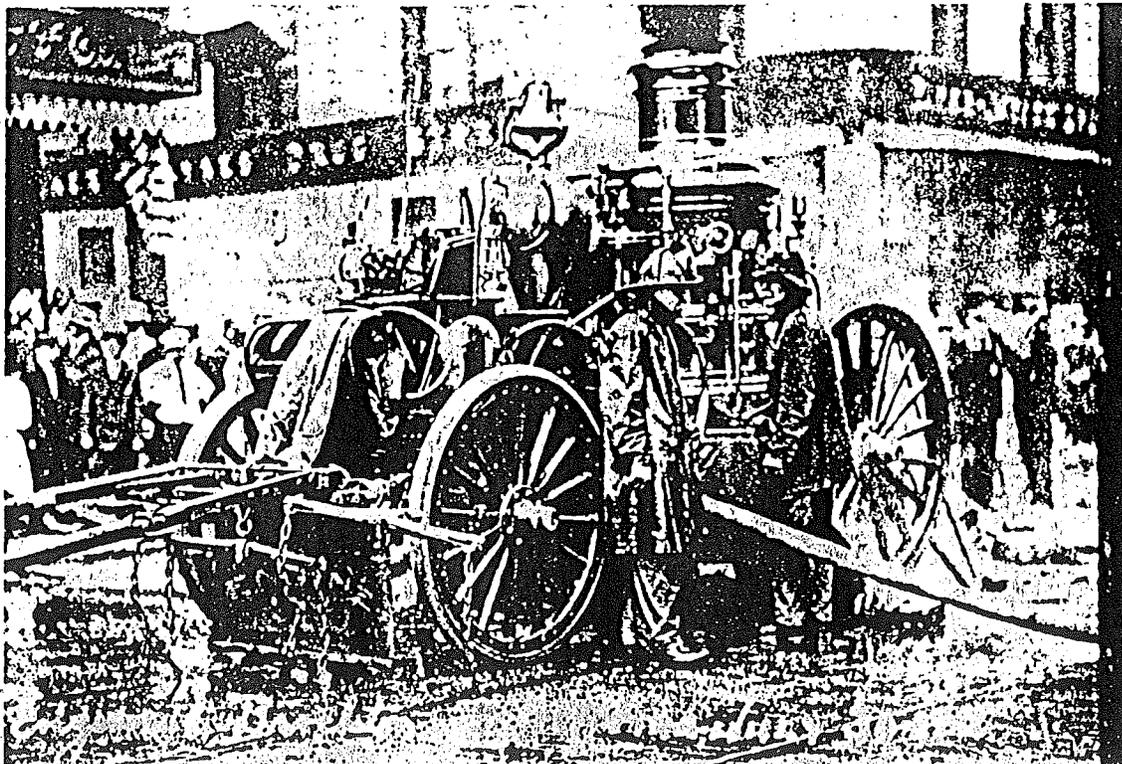
The next motorized fire engine was delivered on March 9, 1910. That new engine was located at Fire Station No. 3, 916 North Main St. Montello. The present Station No. 3 was opened on August 23, 1911.

The Brockton Fire Department suffered it's first line of duty death on July 4, 1912, when Firefighter Michael Neafsey, who had been a call man for 25 years, died when he was run over by the rear wheels of the 7 ton Ladder No. 1. While attempting to jump onto the running board of Ladder No. 1, which was responding to an alarm, he missed the running board and fell with the rear wheels passing over him.

On June 30, 1915 the Brockton Fire Department established a fully permanent department with the abolition of the call force.

In 1916 following the death of Chief Harry Marston, Assistant Chief William F Daley was promoted to Chief of Department. Chief Marston, served as Brockton's Chief for twenty four years and had once been offered the position of Chief of the Brooklyn, New York Fire Department, which he declined.

On February 2, 1920, the two platoon work schedule was instituted for the members of the Brockton Fire Department. Also in 1920, a new Seagrave Pumping Engine was delivered and placed in commission at Engine No. 5. The decommissioning of the



Engine Co. 1 First Size Steamer
Circa 1896

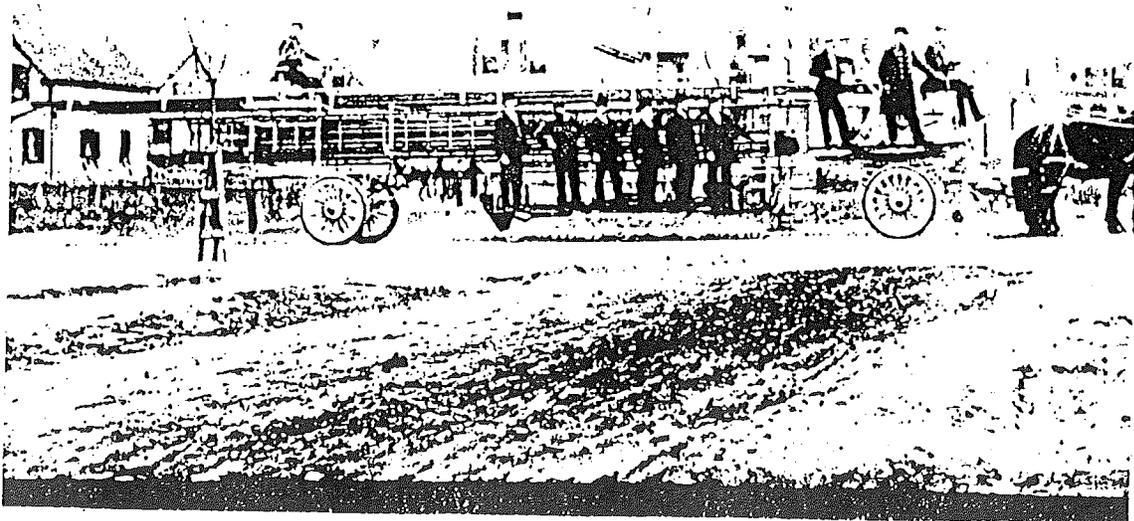
horse-drawn Westinghouse Gasoline Engine 5 marked the passing of the final horse-drawn fire apparatus in the Brockton Fire Dept.

On May 18, 1923, the Brockton Fire Dept. suffered its second and third loss of Fire Fighters in the line of duty. Combination 2, while responding to a box alarm, overturned on Plain St. near Main St. resulting in the deaths of F.F. Herman J. Cowdrey, Jr. and F.F. Charles A. Daley. On September 3rd of that same year Fire Fighter Anthony Glover of Ladder 1, was electrocuted when he came in contact with a live electrical wire, while fighting a fire in a grain shed.

In 1928 Chief Daley, while on a fishing trip with several prominent Brocktonians, drowned at Moosehead Lake, Maine. Following the death of Chief Daley, Deputy Chief Frank F. Dickinson was appointed Chief of the Brockton Fire Department on August 7, 1928.

The worst disaster in the history of the Brockton Fire Department occurred on March 10, 1941, when thirteen Brockton firefighters were killed at the Strand Theater on School St. During the fire, the roof suddenly collapsed due to a combination of the heat of the fire weakening the steel truss roof supports along with the build-up of heavy snow and ice on the roof following a winter storm. With the sounding of the general alarm aid was summoned from Abington, Bridgewater, Canton, Easton, Stoughton, Weymouth, and Whitman. In Memory of the thirteen firefighters who died in the Strand Theater Disaster a memorial tablet made of coal was presented to the City of Brockton by Firefighter Local 609, Scranton, Pa. This memorial stands today inside Brockton City Hall.

On December 6, 1943 the Brockton Fire Department suffered another line-of-duty death. Firefighter Richard J. Barry, while riding on Combination 4 and responding to box 2136 for an oil burner flare-up, collided with a police cruiser at the intersection of Montello and Grove Streets killing Firefighter Barry and injuring both police officers.



Ladder No. 1
Circa 1907

On June 6, 1946 Chief Frank F. Dickinson retired after serving the department since 1891. Following the retirement of Chief Dickinson, Deputy Chief Lawrence Lynch was appointed Chief of the Brockton Fire Department on February 11, 1947, Lawrence Lynch. He would serve as Chief for fourteen years.

The newest style of fire truck began service with the Brockton Fire Department on July 12, 1948. Engine 4 and Squad A were replaced with brand-new Seagrave triple combination pumpers. The new Seagraves were delivered on June 4, 1948 from Columbus, Ohio.

At this point the Brockton Fire Department consisted of a Chief, three Deputy Chiefs, ten Captains, ten Lieutenants, one-hundred eighteen Fire Fighters, and thirteen Civilians. There were six fire stations throughout the city housing five engine companies, one squad, and three ladder companies. An engine company consisted of two pieces of apparatus, one was designated the combination and the other designated the engine.

Chief Lawrence F. Lynch following forty-one years on the department, retired on August 7, 1961. On February 13, 1962 following the retirement of Chief Lynch, Mayor McGrath promoted Deputy Chief John W. Kelley to Chief of Department. Chief Kelley served as Chief of Department just over one year when he returned to his former job as Deputy Chief. On October 29 of 1963, Deputy Chief Edward L. Burrell was appointed Chief of Department.

In April of 1968 the Brockton Fire Department received a refurbished Pontiac ambulance and this marked the beginning of municipal ambulance service provided by the Brockton Fire Department. This service continued until budget cutbacks forced the elimination of this service by the Brockton Fire Department due to the effects of



Engine Co. 5 1908 Westinghouse Gasoline Powered Engine
1908 - 1929

proposition 2 1/2 on July 1, 1981. Ambulance transports were then provided by a private company.

In 1969, the first of many Mack pumping engines was delivered. This marked the beginning of the change from Seagrave apparatus to Mack apparatus in the department. All the Mack pumpers were equipped with 1,000 GPM pumps and all carried five hundred gallons of water. The acquisition of these new Mack pumpers began the transition to diesel engines in the Department.

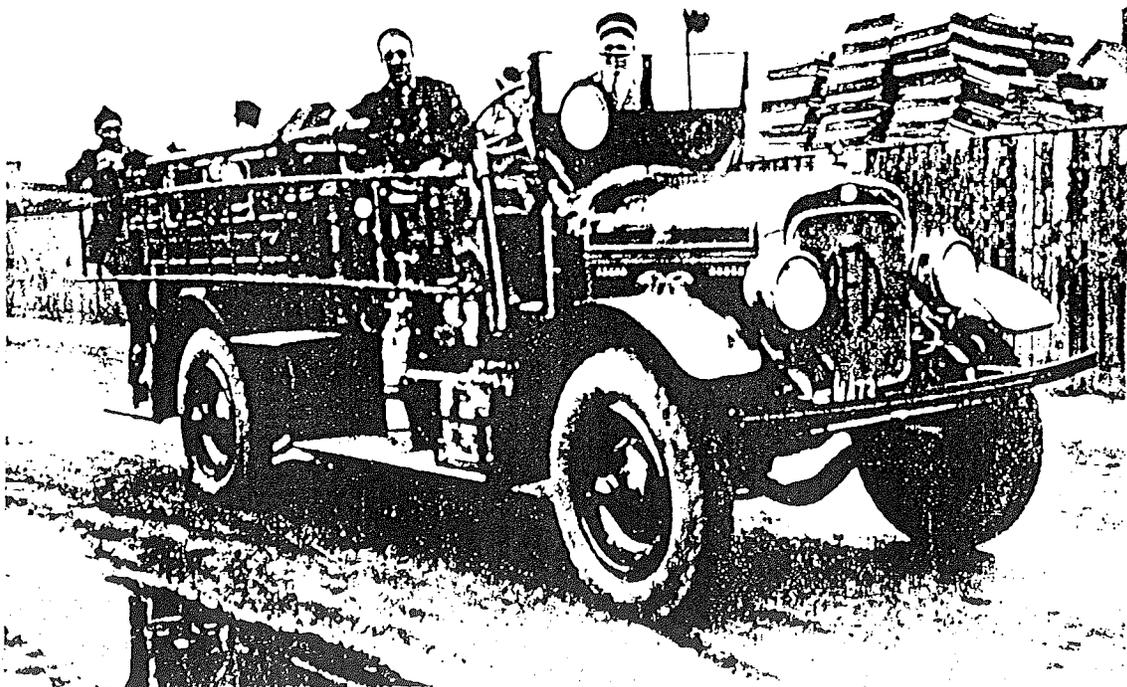
A new era in technology for the Brockton Fire Department arrived on October 20, 1973 when portable radios were first introduced into the Department.

On November 3, 1975 the Brockton Fire Department suffered a line-of-duty death when Captain Harold L. Weeks suffered a heart attack while commanding operations at a fire at 59-65 Main street. Captain Weeks had been a member of the department for thirty-six years and his funeral was attended by over five hundred firefighters.

The opening of the first new fire station since 1906 took place when a new station was opened at Cary Hill. This new station, designated station seven and housing the newly commissioned Engine Company 7 was opened on February 13, 1977. Station 7 was dedicated to army Major Frederick D. Daniloff, who was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for service in Vietnam. This was the first new station constructed in over seventy years.

On August 20, 1977, following a brief ceremony, the Central Fire Station on Pleasant St. was placed on the National Register of Historical Places.

On August 27, 1979 dedication ceremonies were held for two new Fire Department facilities. The new East Side Fire Station, Station 4, located at 305 Crescent Street,



Combination No. 2 - Seagrave
1924 - 1952

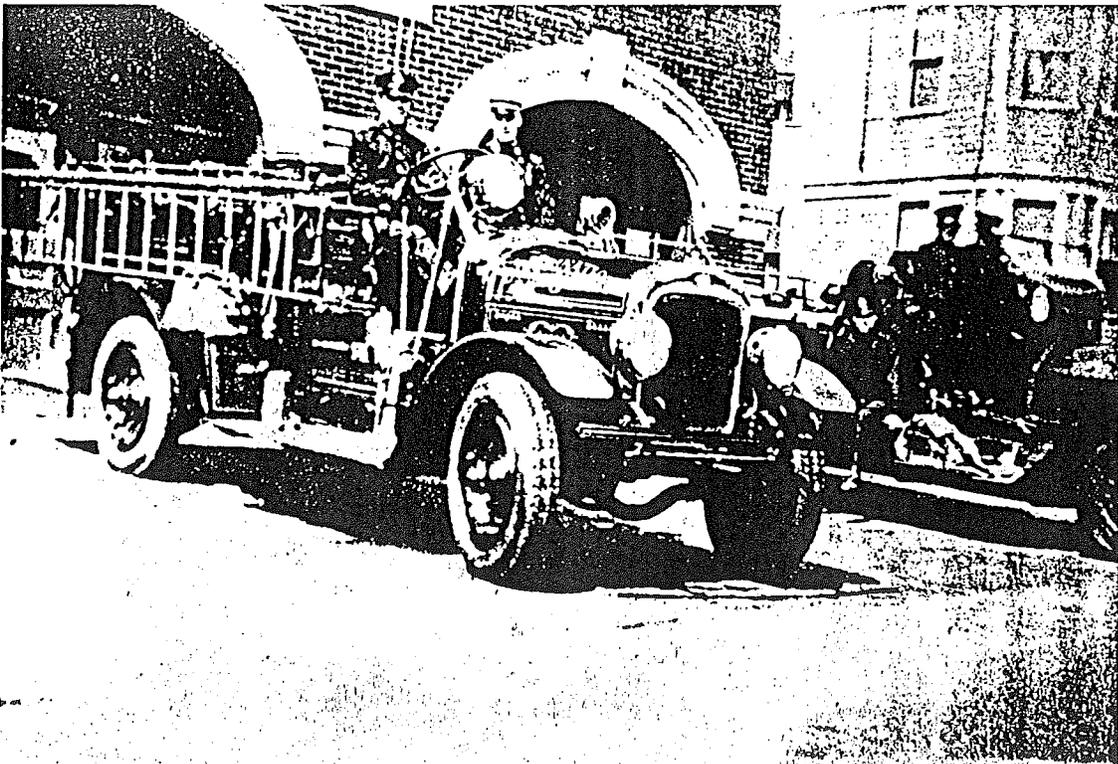
housing Engine Co. 4 as well as the new Department Repair Facility was dedicated to the memory of the thirteen Fire Fighters who died at the Strand Theater fire on March 10, 1941. The new West Side Fire Station, Station 6, located at 540 West Street, housing Engine Co. 5 as well as the new Department Training facility, was dedicated to the memory of former Chief Lawrence F. Lynch who served the Department for forty-one years.

On August 29, 1979, Chief Edward L. Burrell retired after serving the Department for forty years. Three months later, in November, 1979, following the retirement of Chief Edward L. Burrell, Deputy Chief James M. Hallisey was promoted to Chief of Department.

In 1980, in order to comply with A.D.A. regulations and the need for larger office space the Chief's office was relocated from it's former location at Station 1 on Pleasant Street to the newly constructed Training Facility at Station 6 on West Street. The Training Facility was then relocated to the former Department Repair Facility at Station 1

On September 30, 1982 Fire Station No. 5, housing Ladder Co. 3, at North Montello Street and East Battles Street was closed. Ladder Co. 3 was relocated to Station No. 3 on North Main Street and housed along with Engine Co. 3.

Following the loss of Ladder 2 at the London Clothing Factory fire on Main Street, a new unique piece of apparatus was ordered. A Mack -Baker 95 foot tower ladder was placed into service on December 21, 1987 to replace the former Ladder 2. Due to the size of this new apparatus and the inability of the old Campello Fire Station to house this unit the tower ladder was relocated at Station No. 4 to be house with Engine Co. 4. This new unit was designated Tower Co. 1 and Ladder 2 was retired. Tower 1 was the latest in technology in firefighting apparatus when it was purchased.



Combination No. 3 - 1926 Seagrave
1926 - 1959

On May 19, 1989 the Brockton Fire Museum was dedicated and opened. The new museum houses the old Protector No. 3 hand tub pumper that had served the city before the turn of the century. The museum also houses many artifacts of a firefighting era gone by.

On April 25, 1990 the Fire Alarm Office underwent major renovations and the Fire Alarm System was modernized. This renovation included the installation of computers and the replacement of the 1922 equipment with the newest fire alarm equipment available. This change also ended the former method of dispatch of companies by telegraph codes. Dispatching of apparatus was now accomplished by direct voice communication between the fire alarm dispatchers and the various companies through the Vocal-Alarm dispatch system.

The early 1990's marked the beginning of major changes in the operations of the Brockton Fire Department due to serious financial difficulties in the city. Two piece engine company operations were disbanded due to the serious reductions in manpower caused by these financial difficulties and replaced by single unit Engine Companies this change also marked the implantation of four inch supply hose on all of the Engine Companies. Due to the need to assign as many firefighters to the apparatus as possible to keep companies in commission the aids to the Chief and the Deputy Chiefs were reassigned to various companies.

In June 1991 due to serious financial difficulties 31 Firefighters and Lieutenants were laid off, 2 Captains were demoted to Lieutenant and 3 Lieutenants were demoted to Firefighter. Due to the city's serious financial problems and the resulting failure to replace retired firefighters with new personnel, the number of fire companies in service in the city was reduced from ten to eight. On June 23, 1991, after eighty-two years of service, Squad A at Station 1 was decommissioned. On this same date Engine Co. 4 at Station 4 was also decommissioned. The crews of these two decommissioned companies were reassigned to help staff the depleted remaining eight companies.

On January 2, 1993, Chief James Hallisey retired after serving the department for thirty-six years, the last fourteen as Chief. Following the retirement of Chief Hallisey, Deputy Chief Kenneth F. Galligan was promoted to Chief of Department.

December of 1993 saw the recommissioning of Squad A but also the decommissioning of Engine Co. 1. Also decommissioned was Ladder 3 and in it's place Tower 2 was established and placed in service with Engine Co. 5 at Station No. 6 on the west side.

A new FWD / Baker 95 Foot tower ladder was purchased and assigned to Tower 1 at Station 4 on the East Side. The former apparatus of Tower 1 was assigned to Tower 2 at the West Side Station. The new Tower 1 was the first fire apparatus in the City of Brockton to have a fully enclosed crew cab with four doors.

In 1994, the first of a new style of pumping engine was purchased and assigned to Squad A at Station 1. This new engine, with an HME cab and chassis and a Central States Body, carries 750 gallons of water and a pumping capacity of 1,250 gallons per minute.

In 1995, the first rear mount ladder to be purchased by the department was placed in service at Ladder 1. This new apparatus manufactured by Smeal Fire Apparatus and mounted on an HME chassis is equipped with a 105 foot all steel ariel ladder. This apparatus also has a fully enclosed cab for the crew. In order for this apparatus to be housed in the 1884 Central Fire Station the apparatus floor was lowered 1 foot also.

The new E-911 emergency telephone reporting system was placed into service on September 27, 1995. The E-911 operations center was located in a new communications center constructed in the basement of the Police station on Commercial Street. All emergency calls requiring Fire Department or ambulance response received at the E-911 operations center are immediately transferred to the Fire Alarm Communications Center by the E-911 call taker.

On November 20, 1995 twelve new recruits were appointed to the Brockton Fire Department and were assigned to the Department's Training Division. These new recruits represent the first new members appointed to the Brockton Fire Department since 1988.

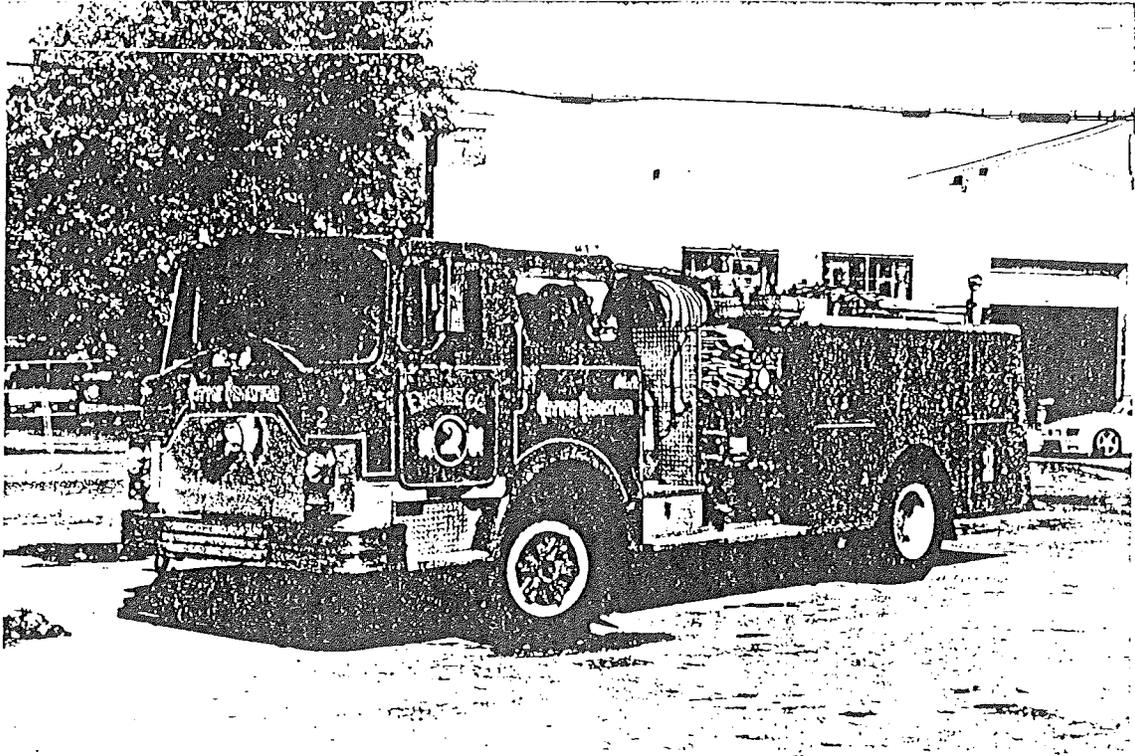
This brief history of the Brockton Fire Department depicts one hundred and fifty years of dedicated and faithful service by the Fire Department to the citizens of Brockton. The Fire Department of today provides the same dedicated service it has for the past one hundred and fifty years and will continue to provide that service for the next one hundred and fifty years.





APPARATUS
OF
TODAY'S
BROCKTON FIRE
DEPARTMENT

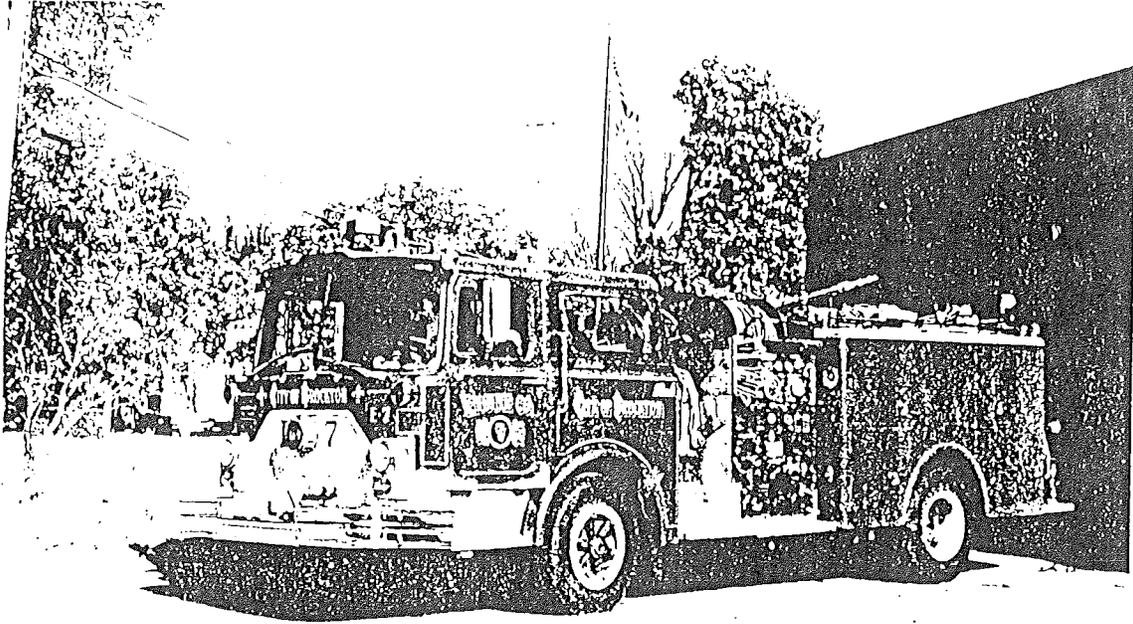




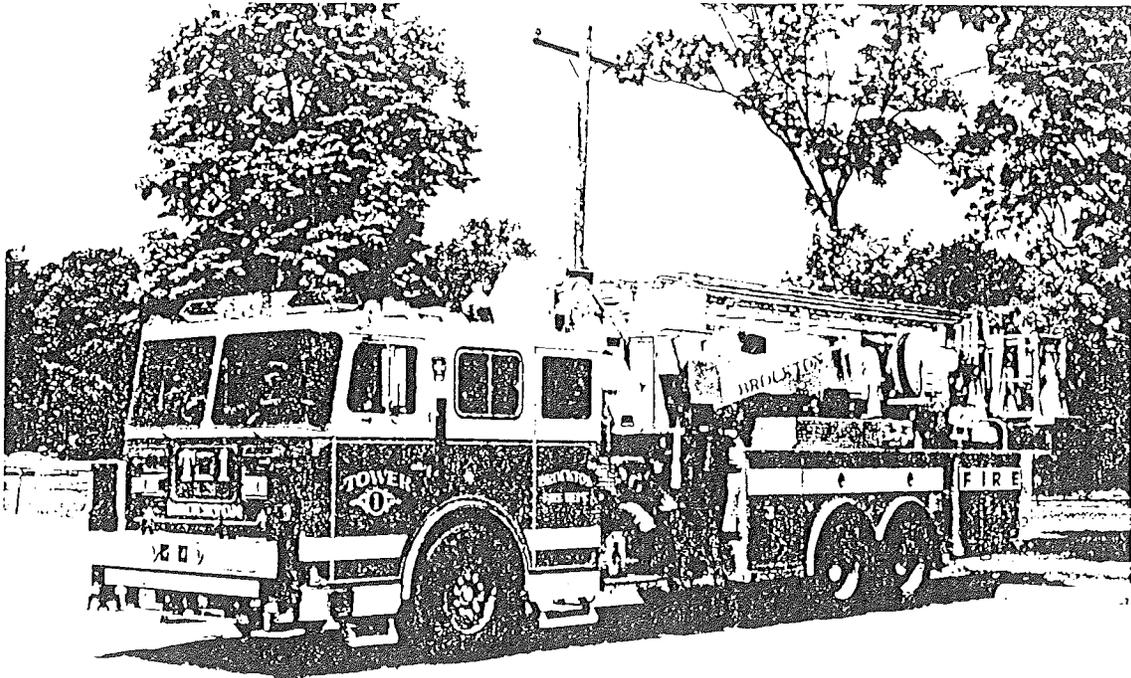
ENGINE 2
1981 MACK CF
(SPRINKLERED WITH 1996 TIME CENTRAL STATES)



ENGINE 3
1981 MACK CF



ENGINE 7
1979 MACK CF



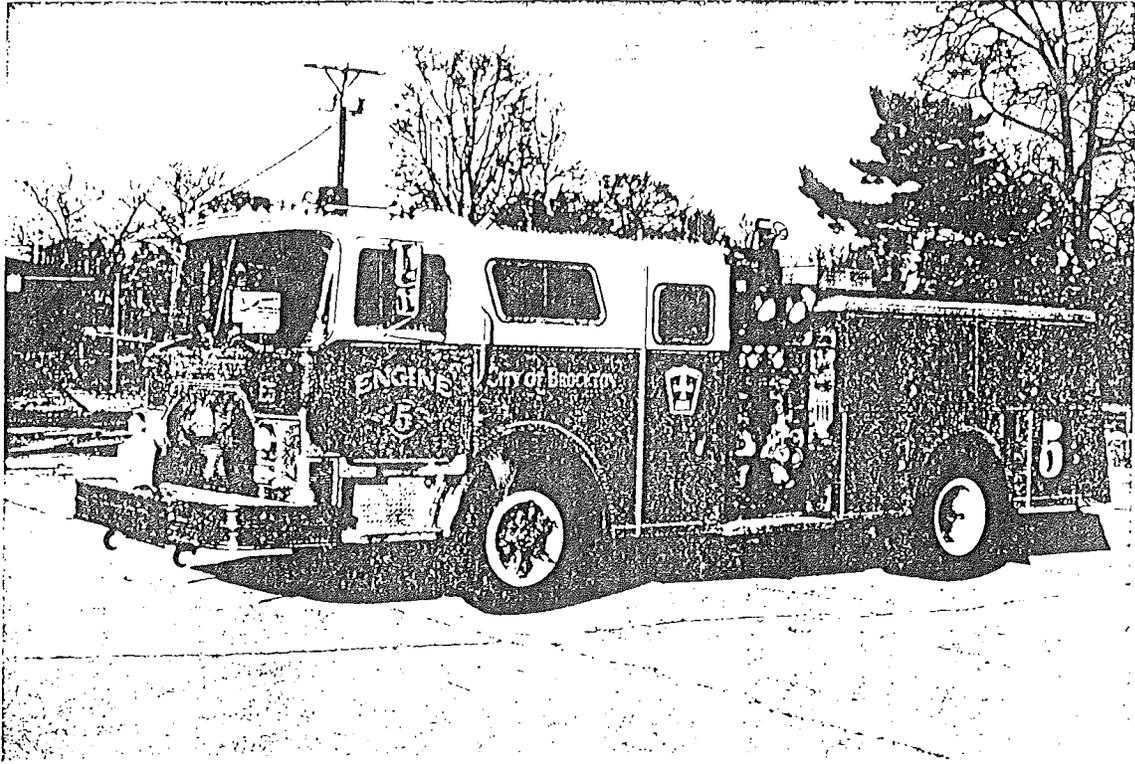
TOWER 1
1993 FWD / BAKER



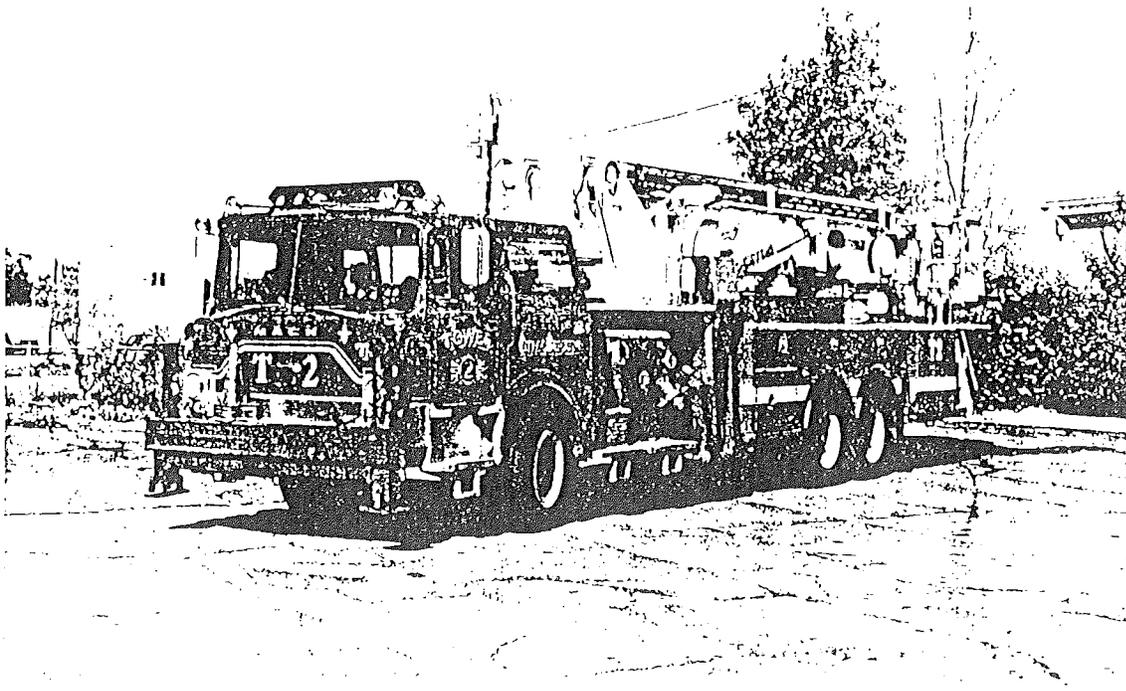
SQUAD A
1994 IINE / CENTRAL STATES



LADDER 1
1995 IINE / CENTRAL STATES



ENGINE 5
1987 MACK CF / KME



TOWER 2
1987 MACK CF / BAKER

(508) 580-0039

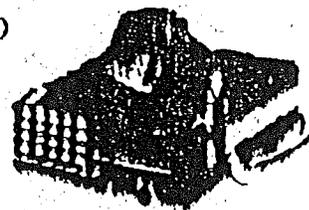


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