

THE FIRST CHIEF of the Port Washington Fire Department celebrated his 90th birthday last week. He is E. E. Carpenter, and he's a carpenter, and he has "14 or 15" grandchildren, 25 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild. Mr. Carpenter's father was the first extensive builder on the North Shore, being the founder of James S. Carpenter & Co. He remembers how he heard the news of Lincoln's assassination while serving his father as an apprentice, and he worked on some of the first Hempstead Plains houses that were built for A. T. Stewart to form Garden City. He became Chief "around 1882," when elected by the Hook and Ladder and Protection Engine Companies, and his election must have been rather exceptional because he



Port Washington's first Fire Chief, E. E. Carpenter, who was 90 last week

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says they "never agreed on anything in those days." Those were the days of bucket brigades. One of Mr. Carpenter's most vivid fire memories is of a fire at the corner of Carlton Ave. and Main St. when they fought with a bucket chain and water had to be drawn from a well. Later, Mr. Carpenter, says, when they had a hand-pumper they faced a new problem. "The great trouble in those days was to get men to stick on the engine," he says. "They all wanted to be up where the fire was!"

Another well-remembered fire was the one at the Cullen Bryant house. Port Washington fought the fire at one end of the building with their hand-pump while Sea Cliff attempted to suppress the flames at the other end with an elegant steamer. "We saved our part," the Chief says, "but the Sea Cliff part burned down. There were always little ponds around the Cullen Bryant house, and the Sea Cliff men put their suction hose into one of those ponds. It sucked mud, and the mud put the steamer out of business."

Another fire Mr. Carpenter recalls vividly, though he doesn't remember the year, was at Baylis Corner. Mrs. Howard Gould was living on Sands Point at the time. "She was a good woman," says the Chief. "She did a lot for Port Washington people." Mrs. Gould, seeing the light of the Baylis Corner fire, thought all Port Washington was about to go up in smoke and summoned the departments of Sea Cliff, Little Neck and Bayside. The Port Washington department then practically had a convention on its hands.