

# Truck 1

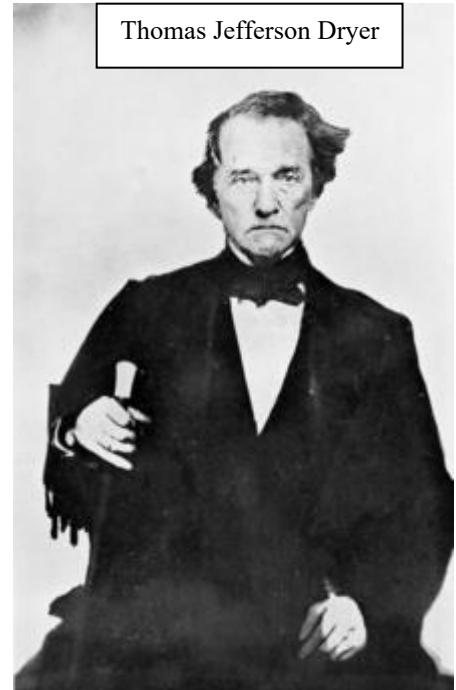
## The Longest Serving Fire Company in Portland

*(2nd Longest on the entire West Coast)*

Agitations of a fire department had been present in early Portland since 1850. The primary agitator was a man named Thomas Dryer, who also happened to be the editor of the local Oregonian newspaper. Dryer's efforts were not met with universal support by the Portland City leaders and nothing would happen. In 1851, a formal effort to organize a fire company was presented to the city, but failed to sway the mayor of the day. This would change in the summer of 1853 when a small fire in the city would awaken the city of the need.

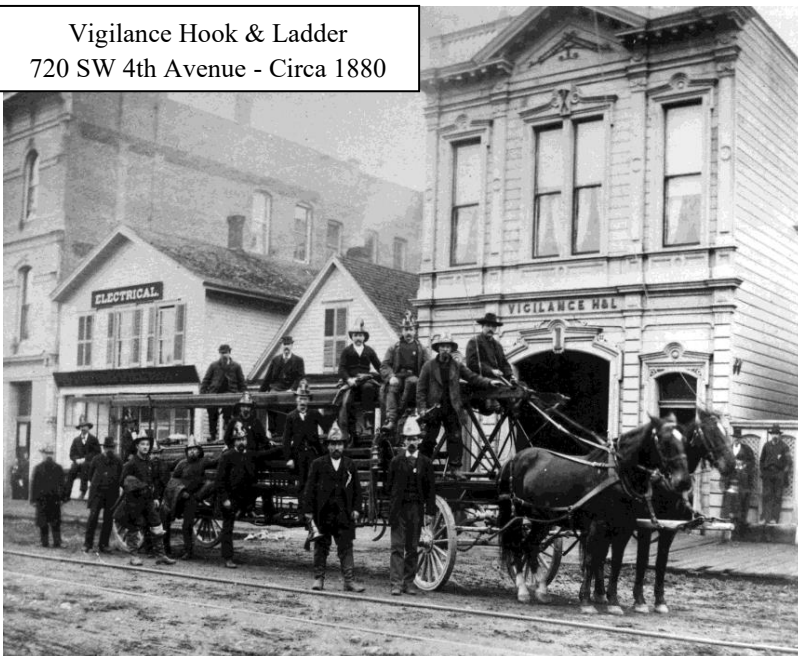
Mayor Josiah Failing would select three Fire Wardens to oversee the formation of a fire service. Their plan was to form one Truck Company to cover the entire city and two Engine Companies, one for the north half and one for the south half of the city. The chosen Fire Wardens were Stephen Coffin, Thomas Dryer, and IB Smith.

After a couple of failed efforts by others to form a fire company, Vigilance Hook and Ladder applied to the Fire Wardens for acceptance. They presented their plan, which included 36 members and a station house. An approval meeting was held on July 31, 1853 and Vigilance was successful. The Fire Wardens signed off on their application the evening of August 1, 1853. The following day (August 2nd), Vigilance Hook and Ladder #1 began service to the citizens of Portland.



Thomas Jefferson Dryer

Vigilance Hook & Ladder  
720 SW 4th Avenue - Circa 1880



Vigilance would establish their quarters at 720 SW 4th Avenue (170 4th Street under the old Portland addressing system). While Willamette Engine Company #1 would begin service 4 days later, they cannot claim a similar longevity because their service was interrupted for 21 years, making Truck 1 the Fire Company with the longest, continuous service in the history of Portland Fire.

Vigilance would begin their journey with 36 members. They were led by the following members:

- IB Smith - Foreman
- HW Davis - First Assistant
- CA Poor - Secretary
- SJ McCormick - Treasurer

They would answer to the Fire Wardens of the City of Portland, led by Chief Engineer Thomas Dryer. A Fire Commission, including the Fire Wardens and Delegates from each approved Fire Company, would evolve over the next 30 years into a very effective management structure for the oversight of the Portland Volunteer Fire Department and for the purchase of stations and equipment.

Vigilance's quarters on 4th Avenue would remain for 68 years, although the conflagration of 1873 would destroy their quarters, causing it to be rebuilt. In 1921, new quarters were established at 905 SW 4th Avenue (203 4th Street under the old Portland addressing system). They would be paired with Engine 1 as they had been since 1891.

Engine 1 and Truck 1 would part ways in 1948 when Engine 1 would move to 1436 SW Montgomery (494 Montgomery



Central Fire Station in the Mid 1940's  
905 SW 4th Avenue



Central Fire Station soon after it opened  
in 1950 - 55 SW Ash Street

Street under the old Portland addressing system) and be co-located with Truck 8. Truck 1 would be paired with Engine 21 at 221 SW 2nd Avenue (69 2nd Street under the old Portland addressing system).

In February 1951, the new central fire station would be completed at 55 SW Ash street and both Truck 1 and Engine 21 would move in. The closure of Station 2 at 510 NW Glisan allowed Engine 2 to move down the street and serve as a second Engine Company responding from the Central Fire Station. In 1962,

that version of Engine 2 would be disbanded to create staffing for Squad 1 (Squad 1 had existed since 1925 but staffing, especially from 1939 to 1962, is not historically clear).

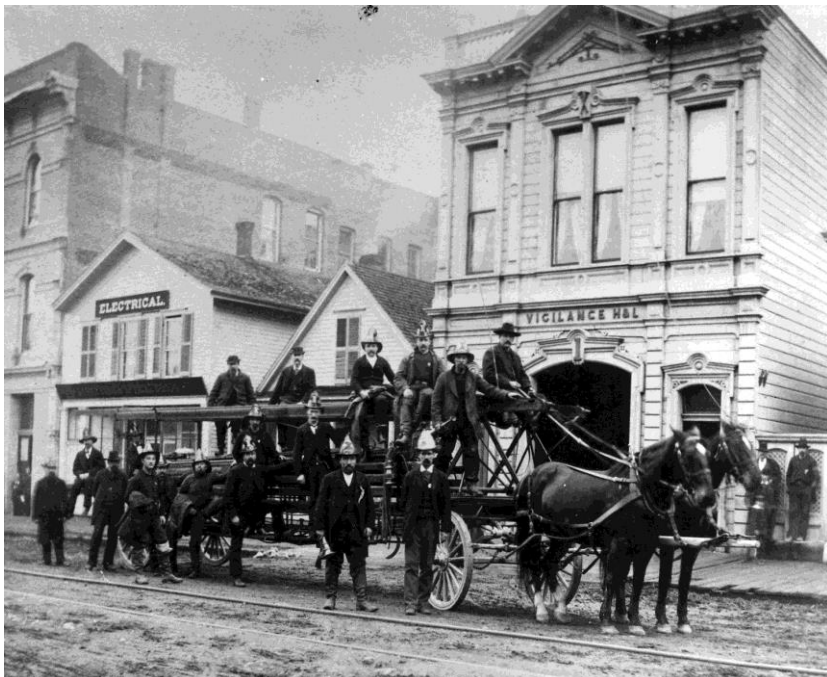
Truck 1 has enjoyed uninterrupted service to the citizens of Portland from August 2, 1953 to today. Their continuous presence makes them the longest servicing emergency response crew in Portland Fire history and likely the second longest serving fire company on the west coast (second to San Francisco - who began service in 1850).

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### *Apparatus Assigned As Truck 1*

**1853** - Vigilance Hook & Ladder #1 - Common Wagon (Apparatus X-00) - no photo

**1866** - Vigilance Hook & Ladder #1 - "A Ladder Wagon Built In This City In 1866" (Apparatus X-08)



**1879** - Vigilance Hook & Ladder #1  
- Hayes 2nd Class Ladder Truck  
(Apparatus X-16)



**1888** - Truck 1 - Hayes 1st Class  
Ladder Truck (Apparatus X-19)



**1913** - Truck 1 - American LaFrance  
85 foot Ladder Truck (Apparatus 13)

**1927** - Truck 1 - Ahrens Fox 85 foot Ladder Truck (Apparatus 55)





**1939 - Truck 1 - Seagrave 100 foot Tiller Ladder Truck (Apparatus 48)**



**1959 - Truck 1 - Seagrave 100 foot Tiller Ladder Truck (Apparatus 36)**



**1970 - Truck 1 - Sutphen 85 foot Platform Aerial (Apparatus 96)**



**1991 - Truck 1 -  
Sutphen 100 foot  
Platform Aerial  
(Apparatus 97)**



**2010 - Truck 1 -  
Pierce 100 foot  
Platform Aerial  
(Apparatus 118)**



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