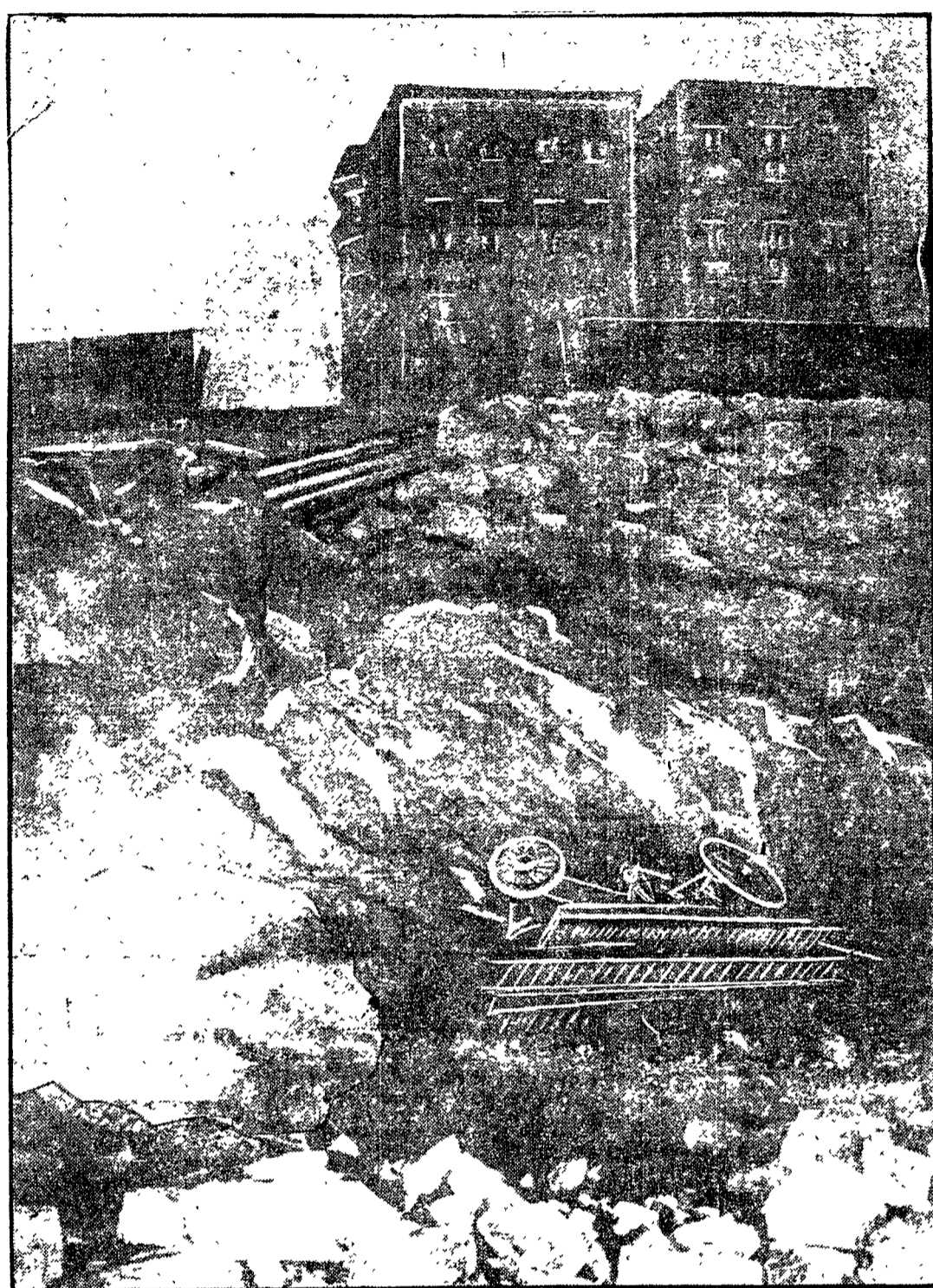


# FIRE TRUCK PLUNGES 50 FEET OVER LEDGE

## Drags Horses Headlong Down Parker Hill--- Driver and All Land Amid Rocks.



PHOTOGRAPH OF SMASHED TRUCK AND ROCKS OVER WHICH IT FELL IN ROXBURY

## Doyle Sticks to Post and Escapes With Life---Animals Hardly Scratched, Apparatus Demolished.

Ladder 12 of the Fire Department lies a mass of twisted metal and shattered woodwork at the foot of a ledge in Terrace st, Roxbury, and its driver, George F. Doyle, is confined to his home, 178 St Alphonse st, Roxbury, suffering from a possible fracture of a rib and a number of bruises, which he received in one of the most remarkable accidents in the history of the department.

Driver Doyle's escape from death was almost miraculous, for his truck slid down the slippery roadway of Parker Hill av notwithstanding his desperate efforts to stop it by the brakes. The heavy apparatus plunged across Parker st, through a fence, again across a vacant lot for 100 feet, and then, bursting through another fence, dropped from the brow of the ledge to Terrace st 50 feet below, amid great heaps of broken rock. The three horses, which were dragged over the ledge into the lot fronting on Terrace st, escaped with a few bruises and were led back to the ladder house in Tremont st as if nothing unusual had happened.

At 8:35 last night an alarm was sounded from box 279 for a fire in the New England Baptist Hospital, at the crest of Parker Hill av. Miss Anderson, superintendent of the institution saw sparks issuing from a chimney, and fearing a fire, ordered an alarm. This was needless, however, and the accident to the truck occurred while the men were returning to their house

### Wheels Ride Over Blocking.

When they started, in response to the alarm, Capt Kenney, Driver Doyle and laddermen Murray and Gilieo formed the crew, as the other men attached to the house were at supper. There has been trouble in the past on account of the stiff rise on Parker Hill av to the hospital, and conditions were even worse than usual yesterday. The ground thawed during the afternoon, but after sunset a covering of frost formed and made hauling by horses extremely difficult.

The men of the company, in obedience to the department regulations, which command the men of a truck or engine to walk beside the apparatus when it descends a steep hill and to check its progress by placing blocks of wood in front of the wheels, worked carefully to make a safe descent, while driver Doyle, with his hand on the brake, guided the horses.

The truck, which weighed 7000 pounds, with its equipment, slewed dangerously, however, on the slippery hillside, and the firemen soon found themselves unable to check the gathering impetus of

the heavy vehicle. Parker Hill av runs into Parker st opposite the houses numbered 814-818, between which there is a vacant lot owned by Ellen and Margaret A Moran, which was set off from the street by a picket fence about five feet high

### Driver Falls Just Clear of Wreck.

The turn from the avenue into the street is short and sharp, and try as he would, driver Doyle was unable to guide his horses around the place of danger. The truck slewed and swayed perilously while Doyle called to the horses. The animals responded nobly, as the condition of the street after the accident showed. The cleats on their shoes tore the ice and ripped the bed of the road as they struggled to get around the corner.

or overturning it in the comparatively soft earth.

He did succeed in striking the house with the truck, but it was only a glancing blow, and with redoubled force the truck slid off, impelled the horses still onward into the high board fence which

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DRIVER GEORGE F. DOYLE

But all their efforts were unavailing and the truck bounded high over the curbstone, crashed through the fence as if it were paper and pushed the horses onto the ledge.

Doyle clung to his seat gamely, notwithstanding the cries of spectators, and steered his horses for the house in the hope of either stopping the truck by collision with the stone foundation

# DIAGRAM SHOWING HOW LADDER TRUCK ACCIDENT OCCURRED ON PARKER HILL.

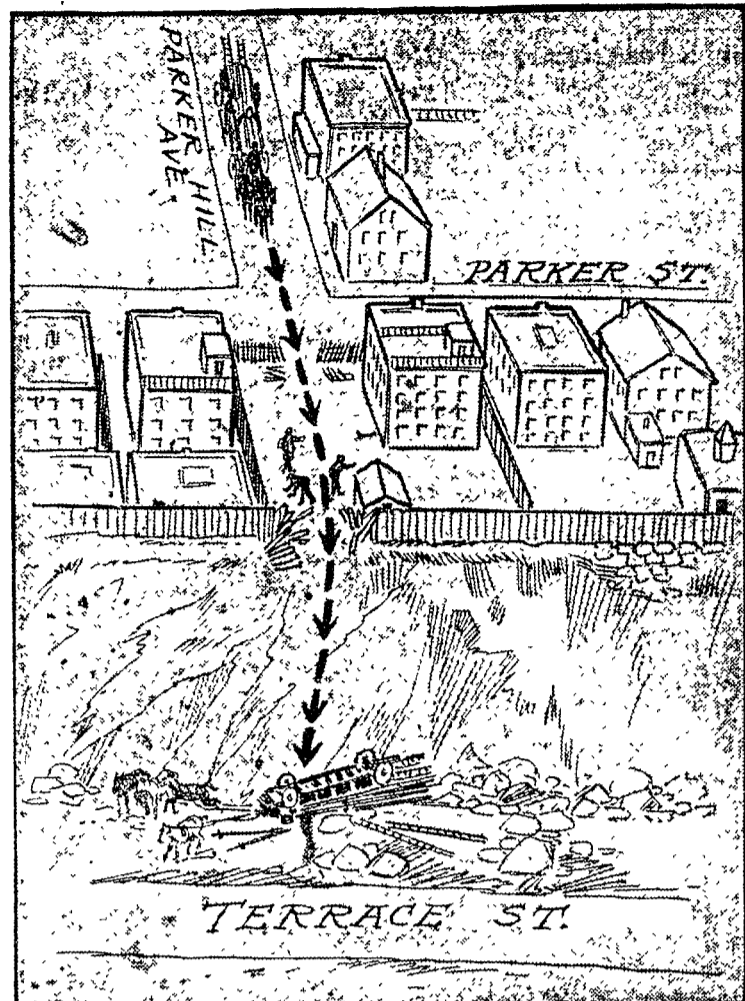


DIAGRAM SHOWING HOW LADDER TRUCK ACCIDENT OCCURRED ON PARKER HILL.

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guarded the edge of the ledge and then with a roaring and rending of timbers the truck and horses plunged over the ledge into the field below.

When Doyle was hurled from his seat he rolled a few feet from the path of the truck and this undoubtedly saved his life. His margin of escape was exceedingly narrow, however, for the running gear of the truck scraped his clothing.

He was unconscious when some of the spectators who ran to his assistance reached him, and it was reported that he was killed.

### Horses Found Waiting Calmly.

Dr Thomas O'Brien of 1468 Tremont st was called to attend him. Doyle was carried into the home of Lawrence McGovern, 814 Parker st. Dr O'Brien, after treating him, ordered his removal to the City Hospital. There the physicians found that he had sustained a number of bruises of the body, and possibly a fractured rib. He did not care to remain in the hospital, and he was allowed to go to his home after treatment.

The fate of the three horses that drew the truck was astounding. One of them, some of the spectators said, landed erect and stood patiently by, while the other two, which were felled and dazed for a moment, struggled to their feet. The discipline of their work asserted itself and the three horses were standing calmly by the wrecked truck when the crew and some persons who saw the accident arrived in the Terrace-st field.

Almost unable to believe their eyes, the firemen examined the horses and found to their astonishment that they had escaped with barely a bruise. The horses walked back to the house, more than half a mile away, and were ready for duty during the rest of the night.

The truck is probably wrecked beyond repair. Ladders were broken, metal work twisted out of shape and the woodwork splintered.

### Have Long Asked for Engine on Hill.

One of the poles was snapped off at the whiffletree when the truck struck the house. The other was broken into fragments and the rear wheels were so badly damaged that they are useless. The place of the accident is known as Donovan's Ledge.

Commissioner Cole and Chief Mullen visited the scene and expressed their astonishment over the escape of Driver Doyle and the horses. Hundreds of spectators who visited the place could not understand how the horses, after their fall on ground covered with masses of rock, should have got off with only a bruise or two.

For some time residents of the Parker Hill section have urged the necessity of an engine house on the hill or of automobile apparatus, as the steep ascent makes it a difficult task for horses to haul heavy apparatus to the top, and there was talk last night of bringing the matter to the attention of Commissioner Cole and Mayor Fitzgerald when he returns from Palm Beach.

Driver Doyle has been a member of the department 17 years, and one of his friends said last night that this was the first accident in which he had figured. He is considered a cool, careful, competent driver. He will probably be able to resume his duties within a short time.