

Close View of Raleigh's 1890 Hook & Ladder Wagon Circa 1913

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You've probably [seen this historic photo](#) of Raleigh firemen sitting behind Station 1 on West Morgan Street circa 1913. The below image is a digital scan from the North Carolina State Archives (N_53_16_3955). Click to enlarge:

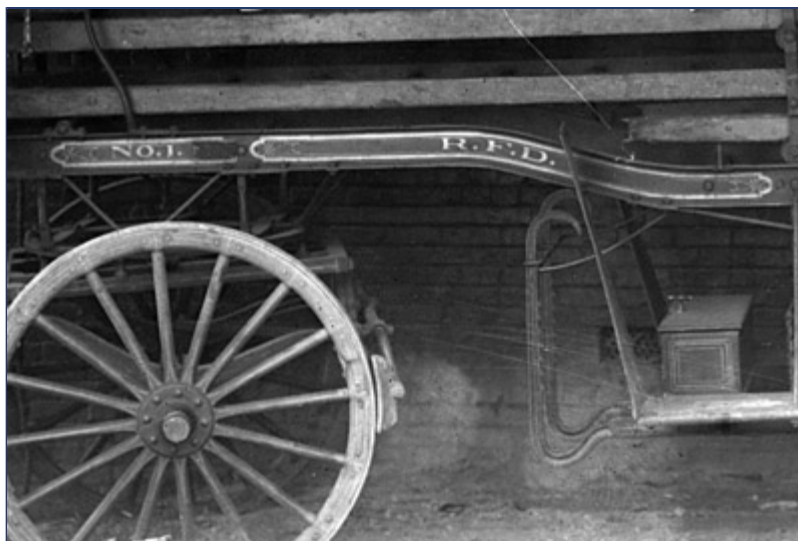


North Carolina State Archives photo

Shown below them is the 1890 hook and ladder wagon once operated by the W. R. Womble Hook & Ladder Company. They renamed themselves after receiving a new wagon in 1890, which they named after a member of the city board. The horse-drawn, steel-frame, city service truck cost \$1,675 and was delivered "fully equipped with 215 of ladders, including one 65 foot Bangor extension ladder; also two pompier scaling ladders, two fire extinguishers, and a complete assortment of valuable firefighting tools." Click to enlarge:



Let's look even closer and see what we see. Lettering and gold leaf that reads "No. 1" and "R.F.D." Couple scaling or pompier ladders. Toolbox with twist latch. Both lower right. Center of photo shows a wheel brake. That wooden wheel almost certainly has a metal band around the outside. Three wooden ladders shown in this view. Click to enlarge:



More lettering, part of "W. R. Womble." More gold leaf. Basket on bottom rack for loose items. Unidentified shiny metal object in the basket. One or maybe two metal door openers, also on the bottom rack. Above them are perhaps a pike pole or two. Maybe also a folding wooden attic ladder. At the very top of the picture, the stenciled number "35" indicating the ladder length. What else do you see? Click to enlarge:



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