

Meet Louis Mahler, Circa 1900

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Here's another Library of Congress find, from a *News & Observer* issue of, ahem, unknown date. Probably the year 1900, as the page is labeled "Twentieth Century State Edition." This one's a profile of the volunteer fire department, as well as Fire Chief Louis Mahler. Quite a bit of praise in the latter, and not exactly backed by examples. But that was the style back then. Interesting citation of 1889 as the year the department was organized. That instead refers to a *reorganization*. There were a couple of those conducted in the 19th Century.

DEEDS, NOT WORDS

That the Motto of Our Fire Department, The Best in North Carolina.

A Fine Body of Tried and True Men, A Large and Superb Equipment.

Four Companies, With a Membership of Ninety Men, Whose Constant Endeavor is to Save Life and Property from the Fire.

No city in the State can boast of a better fire department--this statement is not made as an idle boast, for deeds speak louder than words and deeds are what the Fire Department perform.

The city at large takes great pride in the department, it be composed of men who are ever ready to respond to the call of duty, whether it comes by day or night. That their work in the past has been efficient is amply evidenced by the record of the years gone by.

The department was organized in 1889, and as each year has become numbered with the past it has gradually perfected itself. They have a fine fire alarm system, namely the Gamewell system. The department is divided into four companies.

Rescue, Number One.

Victor, Number Two.

Capital Hose Company, Number Three.

Hook and Ladder Company, Number One.

The paraphernalia and equipment consists of three two-horse hose wagons, one two-horse hook and ladder truck and four thousand feet of hose.

The Raleigh Fire Department is superior to any other in the State as can be judged by the service they have rendered during the past eight or nine years. It is wholly volunteer, the only paid men are the drivers and night men and even those only receive nominal pay. The department is running in a smooth manner and is working to perfection. This is due not alone to the efficiency of the department, but likewise to the brainy and progressive Chief, Mr. L. A. Mahler. The report of losses: For 1898-99 was \$1,244.03. Insurance \$1,197.03, making a net loss \$47. A record that has no equal.

LOUIS A. MAHLER

The Efficient, Progress Chief of Raleigh's Fire Department.

A MEMBER SINCE INCEPTION

Promoted From the Ranks to Assistant Chief in 1893 and in 1895 to the Chief instep. A Brief Sketch of His Career.

Nothing affords the writer more pleasure than to notice the success of honest, persevering efforts, directed by intelligence that knows no such word as fail. Such has characterized the efforts of the gentleman whose name captions this article, Louis A. Mahler, Raleigh's brainy and efficient Fire Chief, a gentleman who has given his very best efforts to improvement of the department.

Mr. Mahler is one of Raleigh's leading business men, being a member of the great jewelry firm of H. Mahler's Sons. He is a North Carolinian by firth and first saw the light of day at Raleigh in 1867. He was educated in the capital city, and at the early

age of fourteen entered his father's store. Upon the death of that gentleman, November 1895, he with his brother succeeded to the business.

Upon the organization of the present Fire Department, which occurred in 1889, he joined the department as a member of company three and for a period of two years was assistant foreman of that company, making an excellent record. In 1893 that his abilities having been recognized, he was appointed assistant chief of the department. His record as assistant chief needs no commendation at my hands.

Two years later, that was in 1895, he was elected chief of the department and has held this position ever since, having been repeatedly re-elected. Mr. Mahler is a man of earnestness and determination and these traits he has carried into his administration of the department. The results are apparent, and when I saw that Raleigh has the best fire department in the State, I can substantiate the claim by actual record.

In the discharge his duties Chief Mahler en faithful and conscientious to a degree that must be as gratifying to himself as it certainly is to his friends and admirers.

In all matters pertaining to the welfare of Raleigh he is thoroughly progressive and is ever ready to devote both his time and means to the accomplishment of that purpose. Mr. Mahler was married in 1898 to Miss Mary Simmons, a talented and accomplished lady of Raleigh. Mr. Mahler is not a politician in any sense of the word.

In concluding the sketch of this honorable and upright gentlemen, it may be said that in his devotion to the duties of his position, Mr. Mahler shows that true and noble spirit which is the basis of the success of all men.

WALTER WOOLLCOTT

Assist Chief Fire Department

Walter Woollcott was born at New Bern, N.C. in 1865. He attended school at Raleigh, and 12 years ago joined the Fire Department. He was Foreman of the Capital Hose Company for three years, after which he was made assistant chief of the department, under Louis Mahler, the chief.

He is also a junior member of the firm of Woollcott and Sons, wholesale dealers in dry goods, notions, shoes, etc., at No. 14 East Martin Street.

Mr. Woollcott is married and a member of the Protestant Episcopal church. He belongs to the Knights of Pythias, is a Past Chancellor, and a member of Centre Lodge.

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