

Early Black Fire History via Sanborn Maps

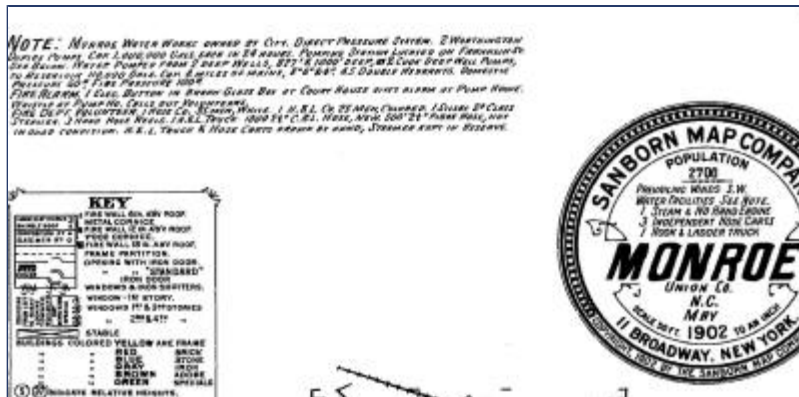
02/11/14 300 W, 7 I - + 3 - 3

Was digging through some digital Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps last night, which are available online for Wake County Library patrons (via this page) or statewide before 1927 (via this site). Was adding some annotations to my archived copy of the late Chuck Milligan's history of Early Black Firefighters of North Carolina. What the heck are Sanborn Maps? Read this posting of ours from 2011. What do Raleigh's maps look like, from this (and other) eras? Visit this gallery.

Tips for finding, viewing, and saving said maps? Use the above links and explore "download" options. Each map sheet is stored as a single PDF document (or single JPG image), which is infinitely easier to consume than within a browser-based viewer. Once you've download some maps, you can use your favorite screen capture tool to excerpt images, as shown below. What if you don't live (or work) in Wake County? Check your county library system, and see if they have licensed access to the digital maps.

How are those two sites different? The Digital Sanborn Maps site (via Wake County library) contains black and white, high-contrast versions of the maps, and including 1927 forward. Downloads of map sheets are PDF files. The second site, via the North Carolina Maps site, contains scans of the paper maps and only those before 1927, which are public domain. Downloads of map sheets are color JPG images.

Here are a few examples of what you might find, for the smaller towns and cities. (The maps of larger cities use a different logo and placement of water supply and fire protection information.) Give me another decade, and maybe I'll build a statewide gallery of these. Click once or twice to enlarge:



WATER FACILITIES: Source of supply: Wells - 5 Municipal owned. Wells - 5. Mains supply 35 Double Muffs 60000 Gals Tank (Sheet 3) on 25' tower supplies system. Tank supplied by 2 Platt Underwriters pumps size 4 (14, 7, 12) 300 gals per minute each and 1 Platt Underwriter centrifugal pump 1500 gals per min capacity drawing from 60000 gals Reservoir (ground level). Reservoir supplied from wells. In emergency can be pumped direct to Mains. Average consumption: 80,000 gals. Domestic pressure: 40 lbs. fire pressure 80 lbs.

FIRE DEPT: Volunteer Co. of 30 men 1 paid driver 1 paid chief. STATION No 1: 1 Street 3 1 20 men (volunteers). Triple comb. American La France Pump Chemical and hose cart. 250 gals per min pump capacity. 60 gals. chem. extinguisher and 1000' 2 1/2" C.R.L. hose (new) 800' 2 1/2" C.R.L. hose in reserve (good condition). STATION No 2: 1 Street 7 1 12 men (colored volunteers). 1 Ford Hose truck. 1000' 4" C.R.L. hose. 1000' 4" C.R.L. hose in reserve (good cond.). Best fully motorized. Gemwell elec. system. 13 boxes. Alarm direct to Power Plant whistle. 115 call bells now in transit to be installed by May 15 1923 will alarm direct from boxes. Also one (1) mech. gong to be installed on Wilson & Main Sts.) Street lighting: electric. Street paving: 8 Miles paved. Street grades level.

POPULATION 2,200
PRELIMINARY MAPS
FOR WATER FACILITIES AND FIRE DEPARTMENT, SEE REPORT
FARMVILLE
PITT COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA
APRIL 1923
NEW YORK
DESIGNED BY THE SANBORN MAP COMPANY
PUBLISHED BY THE SANBORN MAP COMPANY
11 BROADWAY, NEW YORK

INCLUDING
**WALSTONBURG
& FOUNTAIN.**

WATER FACILITIES
3 artesian wells (to have 3 more)
wells used for fire protection only

FIRE DEPT
1 chief, 2 companies, 2 stations,
fire alarm by whistle

FET COMPANY (WHITE)
1 horse, (used on street work during day)
drop barrel, 1 paid driver, 1 partly paid
engineer, 1 volunteer, company, 60 members.
1 hose triplex gasoline engine, size 645.
1 hose wagon carrying 600' 2 1/2" hose,
800' 2 1/2" hose in reserve.

25 COMPANY (COLORED)
1 hand engine, 1 hose cart 800' 2 1/2" hose.
1 volunteer company, 20 members.

Streets level & partly paved
public lighting: electric

POPULATION 2,500
PRELIMINARY MAPS
FOR WATER FACILITIES AND FIRE DEPARTMENT, SEE REPORT
BEAUFORT
CURRANCE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA
DECEMBER 1913
NEW YORK
DESIGNED BY THE SANBORN MAP COMPANY
PUBLISHED BY THE SANBORN MAP COMPANY
11 BROADWAY, NEW YORK

KEY

Note:
WATER FACILITIES: Gravity & direct system of water mains. Pumping station 1 1/2 miles N of Court St. 1 1/2 horsepower compound duplex pump. Direct transmission duplex pump. Cost of this 500 gals per min water pumped from pond of 100000 GALS CAP. ON BRANCH WHICH HAS FLOWING CAP. OF 200000 GALS. PER 24 HOURS. ALL WATER FILTERED THROUGH FILTERS AT POND NO. STONE PIPE 10" DIA. COPE 100000 GALS ON DOWNER OF OIL & EXHAUST ST. ABOUT 5 MILES OF PIPES 6" TO 10" DIA. 17 DEEP WITH 100000 GALS PRESSURE 55 LBS. ONLY CONSUMPTION 8000 GALS.

FIRE DEPT. VOL. 1 CHIEF. 100 LBS. FIRE ENGINE OR PUMP. 100' OF 2 1/2" HOSE.

2 FIREMEN PAID BY THE TOWN & SLEEP ON FIREWAGON 2 VOLUNTEERS - WHITE SAVE FIRE LADENING ON PREMISES 4 HOSE REELS 2 1/2" & 1 1/2" HOSE REEL. ONLY DRAWN BY HORSES WHICH ARE STOPPED AT MAIN SIDE ON ON CENTER STREET SEE SHEET No 2. 124 VOLUNTEERS (COLORED) 2000 FT. HOSE. 2 WAGON FIREMEN. TELEPHONE COMPANY WITH PUMP STATION. NO FIRE ALARM SYSTEM BRINGS SIREN BUT NOT STEEP LIGHTS: 242.

POPULATION 6,000
PRELIMINARY MAPS N.W. S.W.
FOR WATER FACILITIES AND FIRE DEPARTMENT, SEE REPORT
STATESVILLE
IREDELL CO.
NORTH CAROLINA
MARCH 1905
NEW YORK
DESIGNED BY THE SANBORN MAP COMPANY
PUBLISHED BY THE SANBORN MAP COMPANY
11 BROADWAY, NEW YORK

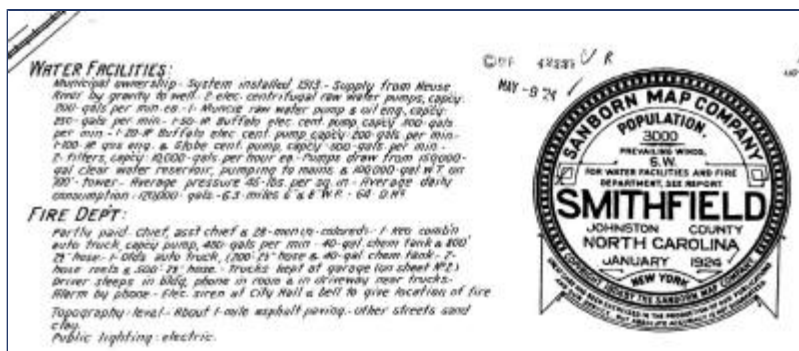
WATER FACILITIES:
Gravity & direct pressure system works owned & operated by city. water supply from Jordan mead east of Monticello Creek. New plant installed 1897, consists of 2 duplex triple pumps 7 1/2' driven by two 40 HP electric motors, or by two 100 HP gas engines. Water is pumped into another basin above lower Jordan River. Sub. station public reservoir, then pumped through 4" pipe into 200000 gal. water tank on 1. Battle Pt. (see sheet #3) on steel tower 80' high, giving delivery pressure of 60 lbs. per sq. inch. 23 double hydrants. Water pipes of this system shown thus on detail sheets. 23 double hydrants in reserve & fully available at some location, consisting of 1 Wardington duplex steam pump 4 1/2' dia. capacity, 500 gals. per min. carried by 3" wrought iron pipe to 6" double hydrants through basins on streets. Water pipes of this system shown also on detail sheets. J. H. KYLE.

The two systems are connected - 8 miles 4" to 6" water mains.

FIRE DEPT:
Volunteer except 1 fully paid driver, one chief, 68 volunteers, 44 white, 24 negro, 1 Lieutenant. 84 members. combination engine & hose wagon, with 60 gal. chem. tank, carries 1200' 2 1/2" C.R.L. hose & 200 chem. hose - 1 horse drawn hose wagon - 1. 1000' 2 1/2" C.R.L. hose in reserve (good condition) N.A.L. truck. 1000' 2 1/2" C.R.L. hose - 2 hose reels each carrying 600' 2 1/2" C.R.L. hose - 2000' 2 1/2" C.R.L. hose - 300 ordinary 2 1/2" hose - two 3 gal. chem. extinguishers - 3 gal. chem. extinguishers.

Street grades nearly level. Main St. is paved. Public lights, elec. (city plant). 3 night police patrolmen.

POPULATION 6,000
PRELIMINARY MAPS S.W.
FOR WATER FACILITIES AND FIRE DEPARTMENT, SEE REPORT
TARBORO
ESSEX COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA
OCTOBER 1913
NEW YORK
DESIGNED BY THE SANBORN MAP COMPANY
PUBLISHED BY THE SANBORN MAP COMPANY
11 BROADWAY, NEW YORK



Name: (real name preferred)
 E-mail: (optional)
 Web Site: (optional)

Remember personal info?

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 No

Comment:

/ [Textile](#)

Comment moderation is enabled on this site. This means that your comment will not be visible on this site until it has been approved by an editor.

To prevent spam we require you to answer this silly question

What are the FIRST TWO LETTERS of the word 'fire'?

[\(Register your username / Log in\)](#)

Notify: Yes, send me email when someone replies.

Hide email: Yes, hide my email address.

Small print: All html tags except and <i> will be removed from your comment. You can make links by just typing the url or mail-address.