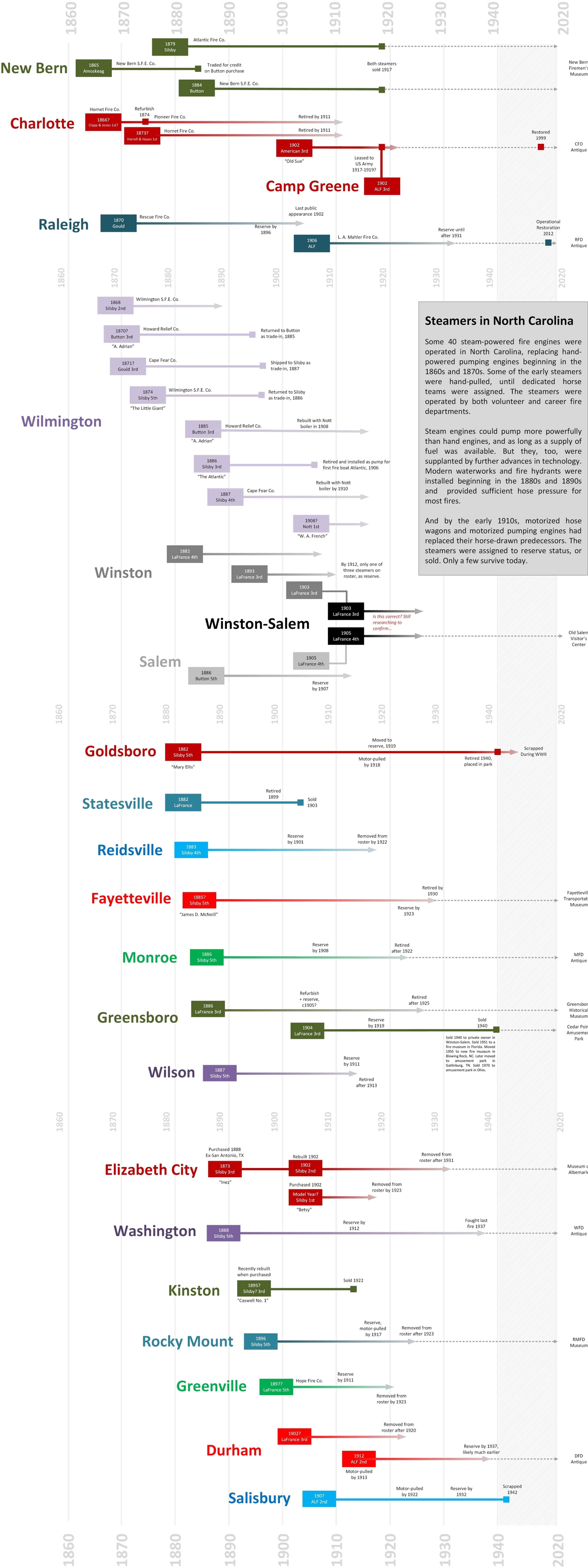


STEAM FIRE ENGINES IN NORTH CAROLINA



Steamers in North Carolina

Some 40 steam-powered fire engines were operated in North Carolina, replacing hand-powered pumping engines beginning in the 1860s and 1870s. Some of the early steamers were hand-pulled, until dedicated horse teams were assigned. The steamers were operated by both volunteer and career fire departments.

Steam engines could pump more powerfully than hand engines, and as long as a supply of fuel was available. But they, too, were supplanted by further advances in technology. Modern waterworks and fire hydrants were installed beginning in the 1880s and 1890s and provided sufficient hose pressure for most fires.

And by the early 1910s, motorized hose wagons and motorized pumping engines had replaced their horse-drawn predecessors. The steamers were assigned to reserve status, or sold. Only a few survive today.