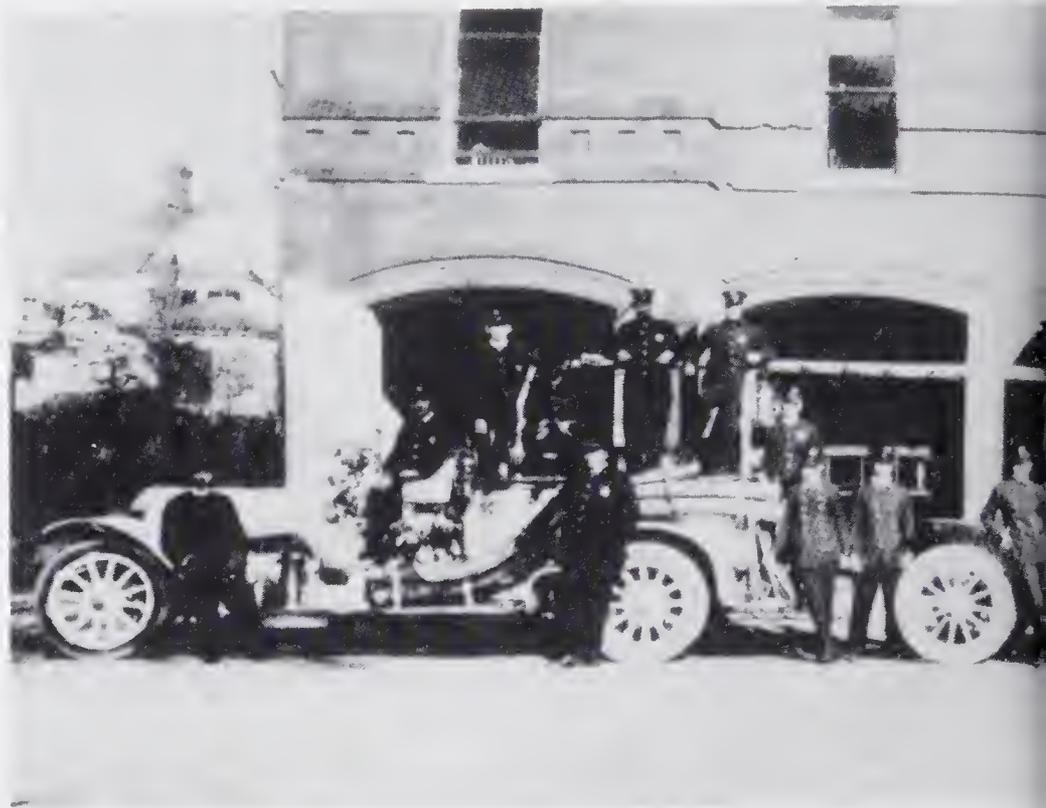
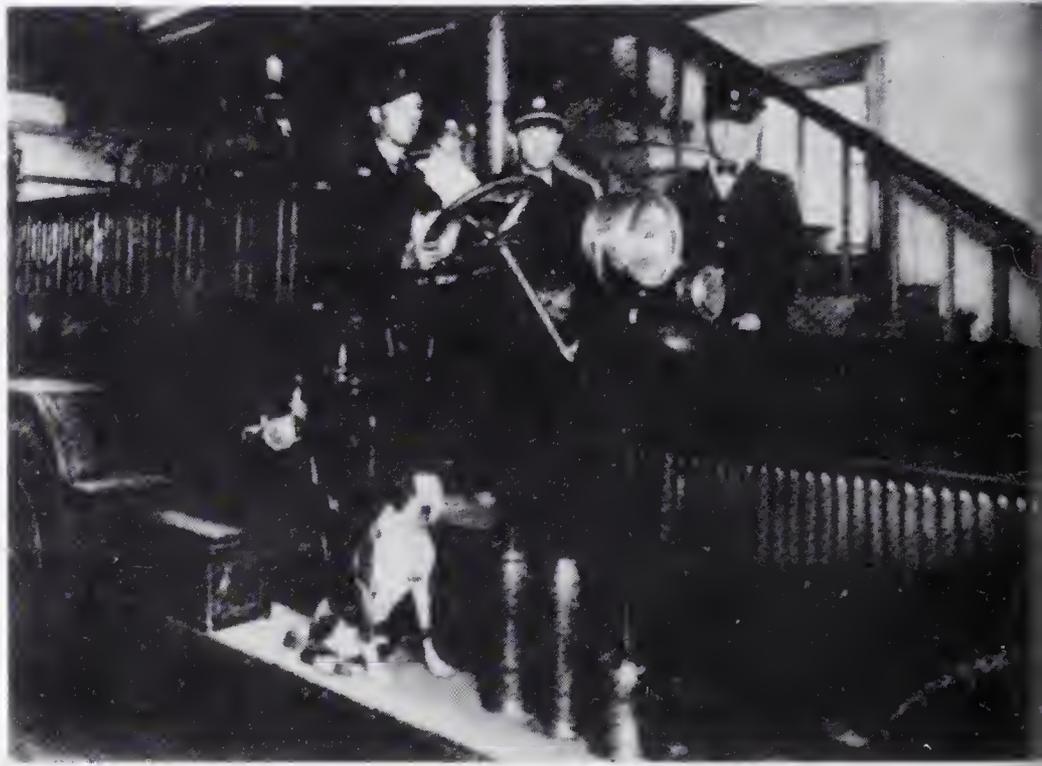


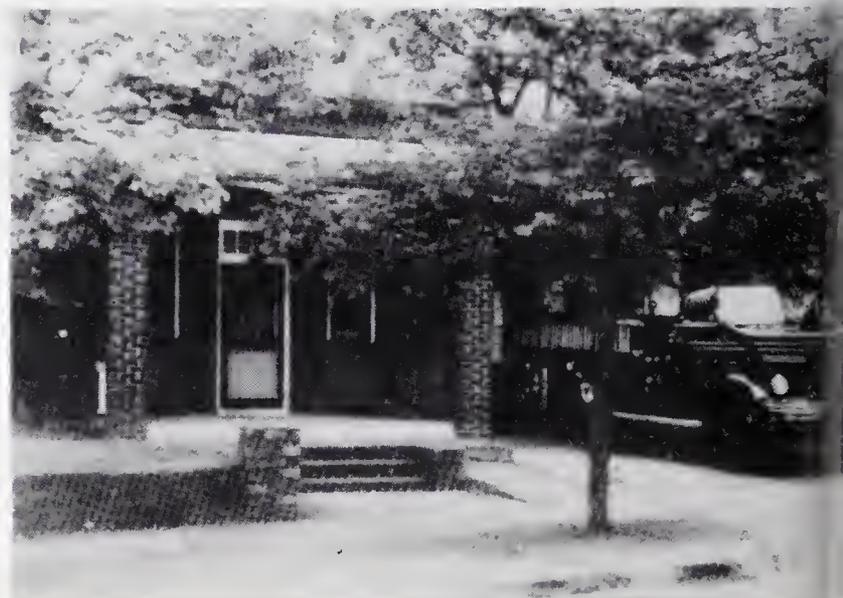
Fire Station Two, S. Salisbury Street in 1913



Fire Station One, W. Morgan Street in 1929



Fire Station Three, E. Hargett Street in 1914



Fire Station Four, Jefferson Street in 1957



Motorized Fire Engines in Front of Fire Station One in 1920



Fire at Yarborough House on July 3, 1928

HISTORY

FIRE DEPARTMENT OF THE CITY OF RALEIGH

The City of Raleigh, now almost 200 years old, was planned and built on land bought by the State to be the permanent seat of government for North Carolina. The General Assembly, meeting in various towns across the state, had recognized the need for a fixed location to store the State's valuable records and conduct the business of government. A special commission met in 1792 at Isaac Hunter's tavern in Wake County and then at Joel Lane's home. After viewing several proposed parcels of land offered as sites for the new town, the Commission decided to purchase 1,000 acres of land owned by Lane. The total price came to 1,378 pounds, or about 2,756 dollars. Thus, 1792 is the date of the establishment of Raleigh. The new capital was named for Sir Walter Raleigh, known as the father of English America.

The General Assembly provided no town government until three years later, when it appointed seven men as Commissioners to govern the city. Then in 1803, with a population close to 700 persons, Raleigh was granted a charter giving its citizens the right to elect their officials. (The City of Raleigh still operates under a charter granted by the North Carolina General Assembly. Any time the charter needs to be changed, the amendments must be approved by the General Assembly.)

Fire Protection Measures

The original planners for laying out the town streets had fire protection and prevention in mind as they made the four principal streets 99 feet wide and all the others within the 5/8-square-mile town limits 66 feet wide. This measure, by reason of distance, protected buildings by helping prevent fires from spreading block to block. The first local regulation aimed at fire prevention was an ordinance forbidding owners to add porches, platforms or other wooden structures on building fronts which would encroach on the streets and create hazards "by fire being communicated across the streets thereby."

The new charter in the early 1800's gave City Commissioners "full power" when fires occurred "to do what they may deem necessary to stop the progress of the calamity," even to the causing of adjoining buildings to be taken down or blown up, without being answerable for any damage to the owner or owners of property so destroyed."

The Commissioners were empowered to make it a duty of every adult male living in Raleigh to take his turn as a member of the City Watch, which patrolled the streets to apprehend law breakers and "to be particular in respect to Fire." In case a blaze was discovered, those on watch were to ring the large bell in the yard of Casso's Inn at the head of Fayetteville Street, "in order to alarm the citizens." Then it was every citizen's duty to rush to the scene with his water bucket or sand buckets, ladders, or whatever other equipment he might have, to help fight the fire. Raleigh's Commissioners made a beginning toward a City Building Code by adopting regulations in 1838 designed as fire prevention measures. One forbade construction of any wooden buildings in the first block of Fayetteville Street that had recently been destroyed by fire. A second prohibited burning shavings or other materials in the street. Then a third regulated stove-pipe and hearth construction in private as well as public buildings, with a provision for regular inspections by City Constables as to their safety. Half a century later, a special city ordinance prohibited merchants from keeping more than one keg of powder in their stores. Another decreed that "no liquors shall be allowed in any engine or other house belonging to the department, or at any fire."

Water Supply

Water, that all-important ingredient for the extinguishment of fires, was in short supply during most of Raleigh's first century. For many years the city was dependent on wells for its fire-fighting water supply. Several attempts were made early in the 1800's to provide a reliable water supply system, but most failed. One in 1818 was particularly expensive and insufficient: A series of underground cisterns, begun in the 1850's, provided much-needed water for emergencies from tanks holding from 10,000 to 50,000 gallons located at several strategic points throughout the City.

Finally, in 1886, the Raleigh Water Works Company began laying water lines and installing hydrants. These hydrants were used to fight fires and also to keep the cisterns filled with water. The main water supply was pumped from Walnut Creek to a 100,000 gallon iron tank placed on top of an 85-foot water tower, still standing in the 100 block of West Morgan Street.

Citizen's Duty

In every age, wherever people have built, whether together in cities or alone in rural areas, the danger of fire has been ever present. As communities grow, the need for people to band together in some manner to protect themselves from the hazards of fire is absolutely essential. Raleigh was no exception to this rule. The loss of buildings by fire occurred frequently. At first the City's only available water supply was wells; most were private, and only a few were equipped with pumps. Thus Raleigh, a town of small shops and houses built close together, was vulnerable to fire from the outset. In the beginning every citizen had a duty to combat fires when they occurred. This was done early through the old "bucket brigade" process — forming lines of people to pass buckets of water from the supply to the fire and back for refilling. It was necessary to fight fire with whatever was available. Dozens of volunteers, however, were unable to deal quickly with one of early Raleigh's most destructive fires, one that began shortly before midnight on June 11, 1816. Roused from their beds by the cry of "Fire!" they struggled valiantly against a blaze that quickly grew out of control and within two hours had destroyed 51 buildings in the first two blocks of Fayetteville Street, Raleigh's main business area. To check its progress, it was necessary to dynamite a building in the path of the flames. The State House in Union Square was saved by men who climbed to its roof to wet it down.

First Equipment — First Fire Company

Two years later the City ordered a fire engine that had been authorized in 1814. This much-needed piece of fighting equipment finally arrived in March 1819. It was described as "a very complete Fire Engine from Philadelphia, with a supply pump, a sufficient length of hose, Fire Hooks and chain." It was evident that the local citizens had been anxiously awaiting its arrival, for on the very next day they organized Raleigh's first volunteer fire company. *Raleigh Register* editor Joseph Gales was named President; the Captain was Jacob Lash, who had installed the ill-fated 1818 waterworks system. The fire company had difficulty maintaining its full complement of forty men. This lack of interest probably contributed to equipment failure and the difficulty with the water system, which in a few years was reported to have gone "out of repair and remained so." A new law in 1826 authorized the City to draft for fire service citizens if fewer than forty volunteered each year. A captain, four other officers, and the forty men were to exercise with the engine at least every other

month. Likewise a \$5 fine was imposed on any other male citizen who might fail to lend assistance when the fire alarm sounded. Evidently matters did improve, as it was reported in the late 1820's that the company was more successful in putting out fires because the fire engine now was kept in good repair; it "was got out with great expedition and most of the company were at their posts."

"Famous" Early Fires

"Awful calamity!" This was the lead line in the *Raleigh Star* of June 23, 1831. The State House of North Carolina had been consumed by fire on the 21st. Wells, buckets and one pump were all that the firemen had at their disposal when the building burned. Adding significantly to the tragedy was the destruction of the marble statue of Washington by the great Italian sculptor, Antonio Canova. The statue was one of the masterpieces of the world. It was noted by some in that day that there was nothing in America to compare with it.

The State House fire, which was one in a series of fires over a three-year period in the early 1830's, caused so much fire-consciousness that governments on all three levels — State, County and City — determined to construct more fire-resistant buildings. The new State Capitol, completed in 1840 to replace the State House, was of granite; and both the 1837 Wake County Courthouse and the 1840 City Hall and Market House were built of brick. Also, several businessmen whose stores and buildings had burned in the first block of Fayetteville Street in 1833 replaced them with brick structures.

An 1841, fire gave Raleigh fire-fighters an impromptu chance to show their ingenuity. The fire was traveling from one wooden building to another when the pump was brought into play and the nose burst, allowing the water to run over the ground. The quick-thinking firemen scooped up the mud and threw it on the walls of the next building, where the water and clay mix formed a non-conductor of heat; and in this manner the fire was checked and extinguished. The grateful citizens dubbed this heroic band "The Mud Company" and this well-earned nickname stuck fast.

Second Engine — Second Company

With the City growing (the 1840 Census indicated 2,244), the Commissioners felt the need for another fire engine and so bought the "Perseverance" to help make up for the woeful inadequacy of the tiny 1819 engine. They formed a second volunteer fire company to man this new piece of equipment and bought additional much-needed fire hose. Two new pumps on Fayetteville and Hillsboro Streets were installed. The 1850 Census revealed that the City's population had more than doubled in the previous decade. Fire protection had not kept pace with the growth of the city.

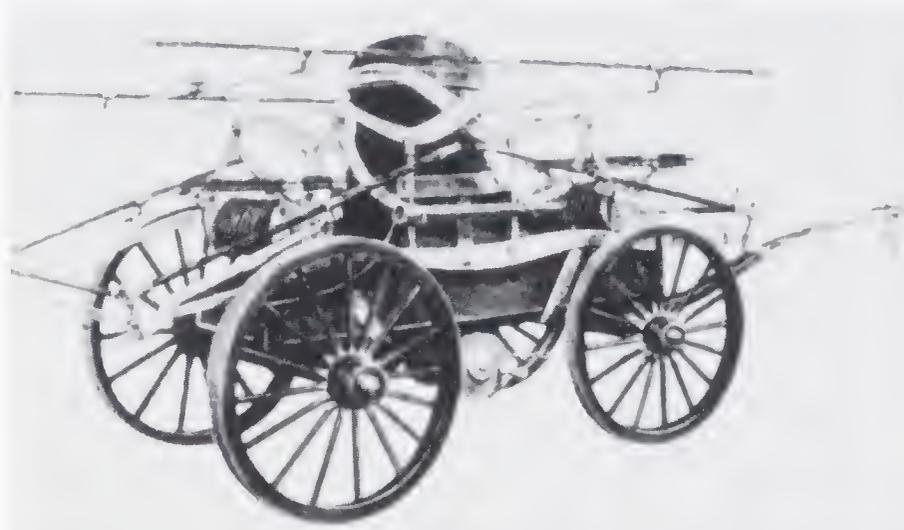
Mid-December of 1851 brought an especially destructive fire. This one destroyed more than seventeen structures on Fayetteville, Hargett, and Wilmington Streets. On the following day, the Commissioners held an emergency meeting and instituted a series of measures to upgrade the City's fire-fighting capabilities. This was the fire that prompted the start of the cisterns system. Constructed with borrowed money, the cisterns held water "to be used in case of fire and on no other occasion." The Commissioners also allocated funds to deepen the public wells and to install metal forcing pumps in several. Two new fire engines were bought at this time, the Excelsior and the Rescue, which gave their names to two of the three forty-man fire companies into which the volunteers were reorganized; the third, with twenty men, was hook and ladder company. The addition of these fire engines and men helped maintain a much improved organization until the Civil War, when many of the volunteers entered the Confederate Army.

First (Temporary) Salaried Fire Chief and Fire House

The first salaried fire chief in the City's history was named during 1852. Chief Seymour W. Whiting was also a member of the

board of City Commissioners. He was paid \$100 a year while his men, volunteers and draftees, continued to serve without pay. The position, however, was discontinued in less than two years.

The City's first provision for housing its fire-fighting equipment was made in 1853, when the City Commissioners made additions to the 1840 Municipal Building located on the site of the present downtown Wachovia Bank Building. The fire engine house was at the Wilmington Street end of the building. Raleigh's population was now (1860) 4,780 persons within the newly expanded (1857) city area of about 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ square miles.



Hand-Drawn Pumper, 1859

Difficulty with equipment again occurred following the Civil War. Fire destroyed numerous buildings. One disastrous series of fires included one that demolished the City Hall and Market. An 1868 reporter noted, "The engines refused to work, and there was not enough force in the machines to throw water 20 feet from the mouth of the pipe." Another newspaper editorialized: "The firemen deserve all praise, and above all, deserve and should at once have the best and most effective apparatus . . . Raleigh ought to have at least one Steam Fire Engine."

Chiefs of the Volunteer Fire Department

The following year (1869), the Commissioners adopted a new code of ordinances under which Joseph D. Backalan was elected General Superintendent or Fire Chief. Thereafter, there was to be a responsible person in charge of Raleigh's fire protection. Volunteer Department Chiefs included, following Backalan: John C. Gorman, 1871; H.T. Clawson, ca. 1875; Joseph H. Green, ca. 1877; Thomas W. Blake, ca. 1884; Edward B. Engelhard, ca. 1889; L.A. Mahler, ca. 1896; Lonnie H. Lumsden, ca. 1901; Walter Woollcott, ca. 1903; Frank B. Simpson, ca. 1907; J.W. Mangum, 1908-1909; and Lonnie H. Lumsden (again), 1909-1912.

It was decided by the people of Raleigh to reorganize the volunteers into four new fire companies. While still under Chief Backalan, new foremen were placed in charge of the following four companies:

- (1) Rescue Fire Engine Company, which had been named the Merchants Fire Company until the arrival of the Rescue Steam Fire Engine in 1870; J.C. Brewster, foreman.
- (2) Hook and Ladder Company; E.H. Ray, foreman.
- (3) The Bucket Company; W.T. Stronach, foreman.
- (4) The Victor Company, the City's first company of black fire-fighters; James H. Jones, foreman.

Some of the equipment of these four companies was housed at the back of the new (1870) city government building, called Metropolitan Hall, which replaced the destroyed City Hall and Market.

First Steam Fire Engine

Shortly after this reorganization in 1870, with the City now having a census of 7,790 persons, Raleigh had its first steam fire engine, purchased with donations solicited by the Rescue Company. The members leased from the County an 18x30-foot site on the Salisbury Street side of the Wake County courthouse lot; there they built the engine house that the company occupied until the City replaced the volunteers with a salaried, professional fire department in the 20th century. The building was utilized until it was torn down in 1914 to make way for a new County Courthouse. Many of those involved in this venture were returning Confederate veterans who had seen what fire can do in the burning of several Southern cities.

The Rescue Steam Engine Company, as well as providing protection for Raleigh, was chartered by the State to protect "the State Capitol and Other State property." Two years later, the \$3,900 indebtedness remaining on the \$5,000 steam engine was assumed by the City. The men themselves pulled the "Rescue" to fires for seven years; thereafter, it was pulled by a team of horses furnished by the City.

trumpet, was luckily able to make more fuss than all the others put together and that was his long suit. The firemen often went to a fire in their best clothes and the joy, if that is a good name for it, of seeing the aforesaid clothes practically ruined."

The volunteer fire-fighter in those days, just as many still are, was required to bear his own expenses. These included the tools of his trade — buckets, axes, ladders, clothing, or whatever. The only remuneration consisted of occasional voluntary contributions made by those served. It was thus that Raleigh's Volunteer Fire Department went through the romantic age — each company its own entity, but very much a part of the whole department; proud of its accomplishments and true to its responsibilities.

It was the era of the parade and it didn't take much of an excuse to have one. The Fire Companies participated in special events such as Fourth of July celebrations and political get-togethers. They also staged their own parades, turning out in their best finery; nearly all had colorful uniforms and helmets by this time. On such occasions the men staged contests between companies, featuring ladder climbs, hose lays, running, and speed and pulling tests for horses and equipment. Usually every fireman was soaked as well as a number of citizens.

Chemical Fire-Fighting

A fifth volunteer company, the Phoenix (Chemical) Fire Company was formed in 1879 upon the members' acquisition of a "wonderful new engine which carried its own liquid" for use in putting out fires chemically. One old-timer recalled that these young volunteers had new ideas about fire-fighting and could hardly wait to dumbfound the older firemen with their wonderful new apparatus. When questioned about the new fire engine, they answered that it was a chemical engine which carried its own liquid; they boasted that with it they could extinguish a fire before the others could start their pumps. The Rescue Company challenged them at once. A fire was built; the chemical engine did respond, extinguished the fire before the steam engine could be fired up, and thereby won the bet. The winners went to Frapp's Bar to celebrate and while so engaged a real alarm of fire came in and both companies rushed to the scene. The Rescue Company won all honors at the real fire, because the Chemical Company, excited over their victory, had failed to recharge the tank. The Phoenix Company, whose equipment included soda buckets and acid chambers, was quartered with two other companies at the rear of Metropolitan Hall. Shortly it possessed two engines — one double-cylinder and one single-cylinder. F.H. Heartt was the company's first foreman.

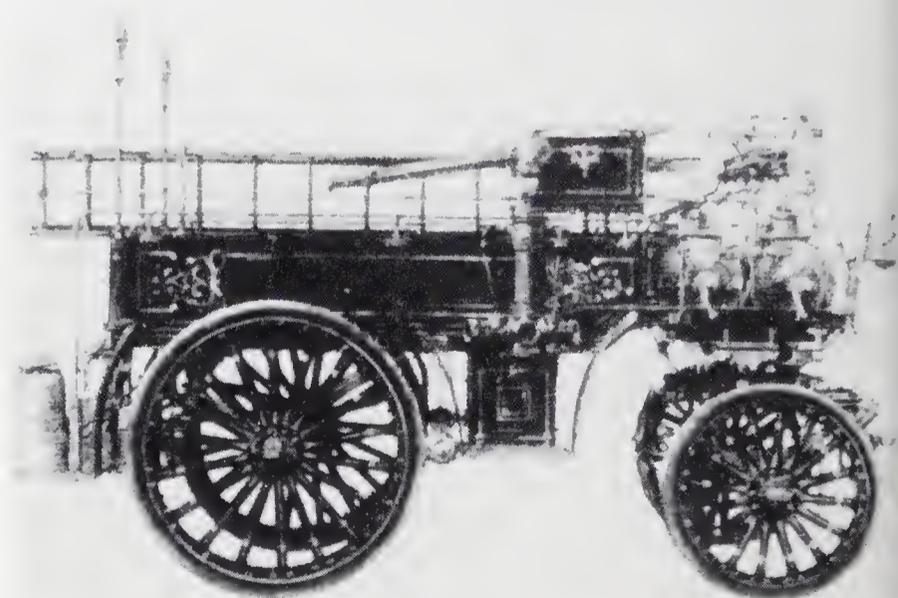


Active Member Certification, 1891

Reminiscences About the Volunteers

"Col. Fred A. Olds, a boy at the time the Rescue was obtained, later recalled: It used to be a great sight . . . to see the men run to a fire, in daytime or at night. The long lines of rope, gay with colored cords and tassels and handholds of knots every few feet, were pulled out from the little reel in front and away the crowd went, sometimes through mud knee-deep; any citizen was very proud to lend a hand, and the engine being as big an attraction as the fire itself. Then when it was horse drawn it was a gay sight to see it racing over the rough streets, which were without even a suggestion of pavement anywhere. Another of Colonel Olds' recollections further described the City's 1870's fire-fighting equipment and the men themselves:

There were two hand engines, each of these rather like a long box, gaily painted, with hose known as suction hose, which was let down into a street cistern or into a shallow well, while the firemen took hold of the rods on either side which worked the pumps, raising these and pulling them down with a swing altogether; sometimes other firemen standing on the machine and in this way giving their weight, so that there were two rows on the ground and two on the machine. Meanwhile the bucket men with their leather buckets were busy, and so were the hook and ladder people. Everybody shouted; but the chief, with a big red hat and a



Horse-Drawn Chemical and Hose Wagon, 1880

City Fire Committee

During the decade of the 1880's, Raleigh grew from a city of just over 9,000 persons to one of more than 12,000. Her fire-fighting needs grew proportionately; and the city fathers, now called Aldermen, took steps to meet them. They began by adopting a completely revised Code of Ordinances. Completion of the municipal Water works in 1887 was of crucial importance; included were 120 fire hydrants. On November 4, 1887, on the recommendation by T.W. Blake, Chief Engineer of the Volunteer Fire Department, the Aldermen appointed a Fire Commission (later Fire Committee) of five citizens who were to look into the concerns of fire protection for the City and make recommendations for further improvements.

The increased water supply brought the need for more hose reels and more fire-fighters. Three additional groups organized: the Capital Hose Company with Frank H. Lumsden as Foreman; the Independent Hose Company under Foreman M. Andrews, and the Phoenix Hose Company, which soon merged with the Capital.

Electric Fire Alarm System.

Less than three years after electricity became available in Raleigh, the Fire Commission, at a cost of \$2,800, installed a Gamewell electric fire alarm telegraph system consisting initially of ten alarm boxes scattered throughout the City. The first test alarm was sounded from Box 42 to test "the promptness of the department in noticing and answering it." The Commissioners, according to the Fire Department report, "were perfectly satisfied in both particulars." This system was upgraded and increased on many occasions and used by the present fire department well past the mid-1950's.

Seven volunteer fire companies now made up the fire protection for the City of Raleigh. Each company had a membership of from 19 to 62 volunteers, together totaling 275 men. Chief Engineer Thomas W. Blake noted that "a spirit of rivalry actuates each company to be first at the fire and to do the most where their services are needed." The fire-fighters took great pride in being on the scene of a fire as quickly as possible. These seven companies and their firehouse locations were as follows:

(1) The Rescue Company had three horses and two horse-drawn vehicles: the original "second class Gould Steamer" and a two-wheeled hose truck, plus two man-pulled hose trucks. Their engine house was located on Fayetteville Street between Martin and Davie Streets.

(2) The Phoenix Chemical Company's two engines, pulled by horses, were housed at the firehouse on the courthouse lot.

(3) The Capital Hose Reel Company, with headquarters on West Morgan Street opposite the Water Tower.

(4) The Hook and Ladder Company was housed at Metropolitan Hall.

(5) The Independent Hose Reel Company was located near the corner of Blount and Morgan Streets.

(6) The Victor Hand Engine Company, Raleigh's first black company, housed its man-pulled vehicle at Metropolitan Hall. The Bucket and Ladder Company, a second company of black fire-fighters, also kept its man-drawn wagon at Metropolitan Hall.

North Carolina Firemen's Association

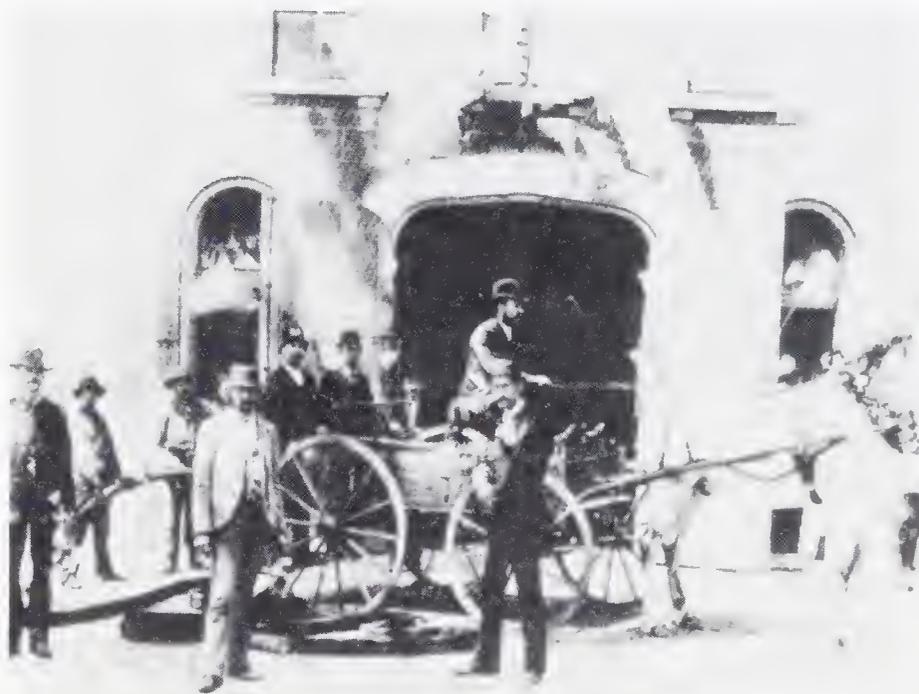
The North Carolina Firemen's Association (as of August 1984, representing nearly 30,000 firemen of volunteer and paid departments), had its beginning in 1888. The seed was sown at a firemen's tournament held in Greensboro September 12 and 13 that year. Chief E.B. Engelhard of Raleigh was one of three volunteer firemen who led in its formation as the North Carolina State Firemen's Association. Another of the originators later recalled that it was the success of this tournament that gave firemen "the courage to form the association to provide for annual meetings of the kind." The NCSFA (later NCFA) held its first annual convention in Raleigh, September 26, 1889. Among permanent officers elected were Chief Engelhard and F.H.

Lumsden of Raleigh. The following year Engelhard became President. Others from Raleigh joining the association at that time were Frank Brannan, T.W. Blake, C.T. Wier, and I.N. Howard. The Raleigh Fire Department has continued to maintain active participation in the NCFA.

Chief E.B. Engelhard, upon succeeding Chief T.W. Blake December 22, 1888, as Chief of the Fire Department and Superintendent of the Fire-Alarm Telegraph, reported to the City Commissioners that "the Fire Department, as a whole, is composed of men attentive to duty, faithful in its discharge of duties, prompt in its execution, and willing at all times to make any sacrifice for the good of the City and for the preservation of life and property. These volunteer firemen deserve at your hands a just recognition for their labors. They deserve to be properly equipped with apparatus; they deserve to be remembered after the fire is extinguished and not forgotten until their services are needed again."

Fire-Fighting in the 1890's

The wording of some of Chief Engelhard's other recommendations revealed several details about fire-fighting in the 1890's. For example, he suggested that the faithful old Rescue's engine-house "be enlarged so as to permit the engine to be located in a position opposite the door, and not have it stored away in one corner," and



Hose Wagon, 1890

"that sufficient room outside of [the firemen's] meeting hall be provided for the men who sleep there." Another suggestion for greater efficiency was that, as soon as possible, changes be made which would have certain companies answer an alarm of fire to stated boxes, while others would be called into service as needed. This would stop long runs by hand hose companies when their services were not needed and keep men and equipment in reserve for any other fire which might occur.

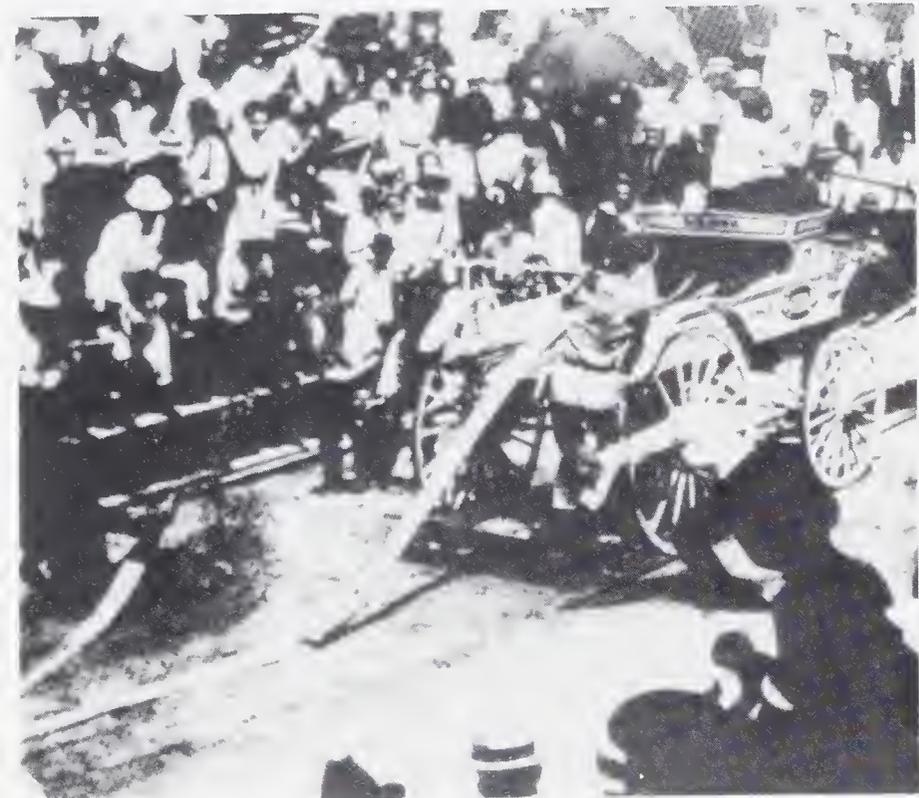
At the same time, the Fire Commission caused to be installed six new Gamewell non-interference fire alarm boxes, bringing the total to 18. The Raleigh and Gaston railroad financing the locating of a 19th near their building at North Street. Chief Engelhard reported that six volunteer firemen, at their own expense, had installed tap bells in their homes, with the result that they usually were first to answer an alarm of fire at night. He also noted, however, that some men very seldom reported to fires and that it would be better that these be out of the department to make places for active firemen. Another recommendation of the Fire Committee to the Board of Aldermen was that they purchase shut-off nozzles and relief valves for the reel companies to cut

down on water loss. Another was for the Chief and his assistant to have authority in their discretion to disperse people who interfere with the department in the discharge of their duties.

NCFA Tournament Records

Raleigh Fire Companies participated in NCFA Tournaments which tested their skill and strength. They established numerous state and world records. When Chief Engelhard noted in 1890 that "not a single house" had been destroyed during the year, he gave much of the credit for this record "to the work done by companies practicing for tournaments, in which they have always been successful."

The Chief concluded his report by pointing out the value of the volunteer firemen to the citizens of Raleigh and urged the provision of suitable apparatus and appliances. The old Rescue



Worlds Record For Showing Water, 1902

Steamer and the old hand-engine, by this time relegated to the "reserve force," were in serious need of repair. Soon the Hook and Ladder Company acquired a new steel-frame truck and was renamed the W.R. Womble Hook and Ladder in honor of the Chairman of the Fire Committee. This truck carried 215 feet of ladders which included a 65-foot Bangor extension ladder; also two pompier scaling ladders, two fire extinguishers, and an assortment of valuable fire-fighting tools. The truck was housed on West Morgan Street in the wooden building occupied by the Capital Hose Reel Company. The Victor Company acquired a horse-drawn reel wagon and relocated at the corner of Davie and Salisbury Streets.

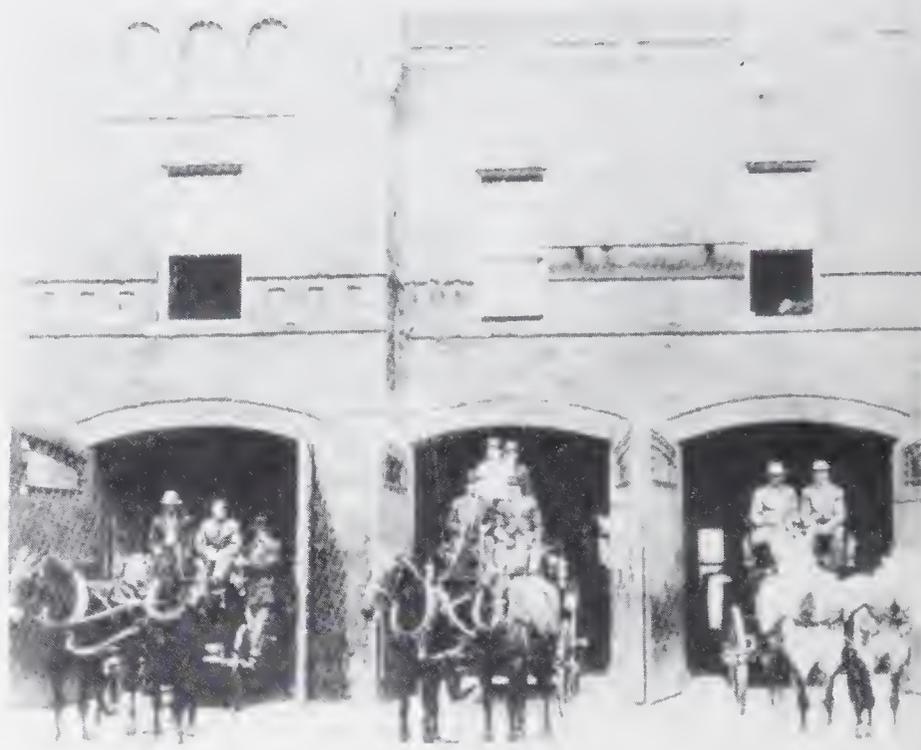
The Department's 123 men were now organized in five companies instead of seven, the Independent Hose Reel Company having disbanded because its hand reel was outmoded and the name Phoenix Chemical having disappeared from the roster of companies. Chief Engelhard's 1891 report indicated that the City was equipped with 125 double fire hydrants and that the municipal water works was capable of supplying 4 million gallons daily, and that for fire fighting, the pressure could be increased from 85 to 115 pounds.

It was also in 1891 that the State Firemen's Relief Fund Act was passed by the General Assembly, largely through the efforts of the NCFA.

West Morgan Street Station

In 1892, a new Fire Department Building with a drill tower was built on the north side of West Morgan Street on the site formerly

occupied by the Capital Hose Reel Co. and Womble Hook and Ladder Company. This building, adapted as headquarters in 1912, continued as No. 1 Station for both volunteer and paid professional department for more than 50 years.



Station One, 1900

About 1896, Raleigh was the first City in America to install in the new department building a storage battery system, together with a switchboard for regulating the Gamewell fire-alarm telegraph system.

A fire in 1897 destroyed the Victor Company's firehouse with its horses and all apparatus. A new station was built at the corner of Blount and Hargett Streets for the company's new horses and equipment. It became Station No. 3 in the 20th century professional department and remained a fire station until 1951.

20th Century Needs

As the 20th century opened, Raleigh's population had grown to 13,643 persons. More were added in 1907 when the city limits were extended, bringing the area of Raleigh to just over 4 square miles. By 1910, the census showed more than 19,000 residents to be protected by the volunteer fire-fighters. A few improvements had been made, including the City's furnishing rubber coats and rubber boots for the firemen, as well as water heaters in their fire-houses. But, more were needed. In 1911, Chief L.H. Lumsden, after noting to the Board of Aldermen that Raleigh was now 2½ times larger than it had been in 1907, recommended that the City begin acquiring newly available motorized fire apparatus to replace horse-drawn vehicles.



Fire Department Officers, 1912

Initiation of the Professional Department

The following recollections of the 1912 events were compiled 20 years later by participants in that change and published in a 1944 souvenir Fire Department booklet:

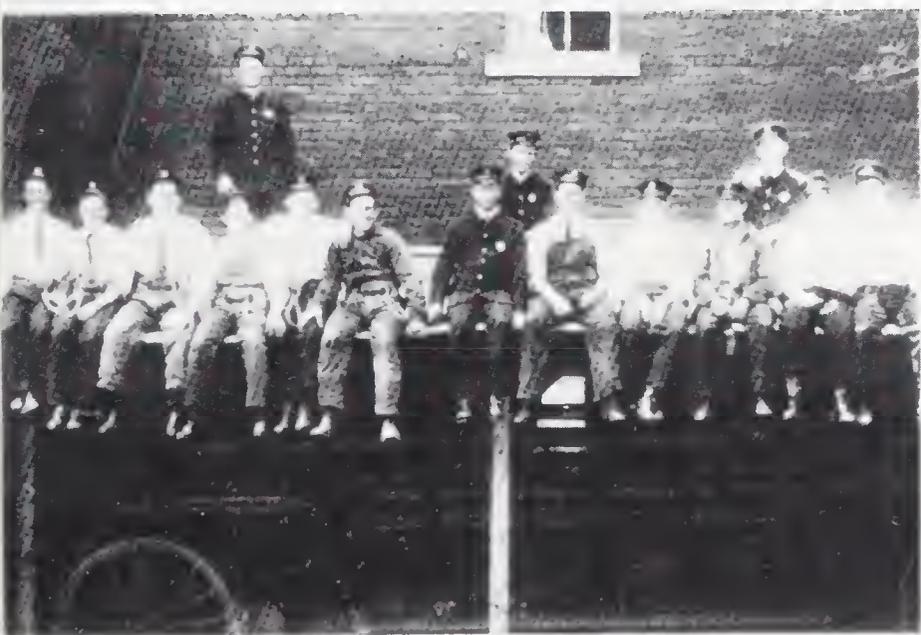
In 1911, Mr. Alexander Webb, a prominent citizen of Raleigh, an official of the North Carolina Home Insurance Company and vitally interested in the fire protection of the City of Raleigh, as a member of the Board of Aldermen, saw the need of a re-organized, motorized fire department and, in that year, started a program toward that end. In this, he received the full support and assistance from J. Sherwood Upchurch, veteran Alderman; W. A. Cooper; and C.A. Johnson, Chairman of the Fire Committee.

After the necessary preliminary surveys and the election of a young, energetic fireman with mechanical training to the Office of Chief of Fire Department, Mr. Webb engineered the purchase of two automobile fire trucks and arranged for this new chief to attend the Fire College and Drill School of the Fire Department of the City of New York.

This young chief was well-received by the New York Department and after assisting in fighting several large fires there, participated in a spectacular rescue of several women trapped on the fourth floor of the Bennett Restaurant there and remained in the New York Department to receive "Certificate of Graduation," thus becoming the first North Carolina fireman to complete the course in the Fire Department of the City of New York.

After graduating from the New York Fire College and Drill School, this chief entered the factory manufacturing the automobile fire trucks for Raleigh and, being a mechanic, assisted in assembling several trucks and fire pumps.

Upon returning to Raleigh, he was elected the first Paid Chief of the present Department and supervised the organization of the new Raleigh Fire Department. In December 1912, this newly organized department took over all apparatus, equipment, except the fire alarm system which was left in another department, tools and appliances and the work of extensive training of the personnel was begun. The original members of this department, reporting for duty the first week in December 1912 were: Sherwood Brockwell, Chief; Charles D. Farmer, Assistant Chief; Peter Welch and Archie Doolittle, Captains; Henry Parrish, Hubert Horton and W.P. Joyner, Lieutenants; Edward Blake, Eugene Lassiter, Lee Justice, Oka Hester, Andrew Martin, Matthew Barker, G.W. Higgins, E.D. Castlebury, W.F. Niblock and R.M. Simmons, Firemen.



First Paid Firemen, 1913

To these, during the first few succeeding months were added: Duncan Lloyd (brother of present Assistant Chief), W.E. Holland (later Chief), Fleming Hicks (later Chief), J.D. Jones, Charles Gaston, E.E. Jones, Robert Maynard, Herbert Peebles and M.E. Perry, all receiving training similar to that of the Fire Department of the City of New York. This feature has been continued at all times by the Fire Department of the City of Raleigh and contributed to the establishment of the first state-operated fire department personnel training program in the United States.

Pending the arrival of the automobile apparatus, the head-

quarters station on Morgan Street, originally built to accommodate the Walter B. Womble Hook and Ladder Company and the Capital Hose Company in 1892, was remodelled, enlarged and altered to accommodate the motor apparatus, the drill tower was modernized and height added and the fire alarm system portion separated from the main fire station and fireproofed.

The Rescue Station (changed to No. 2 station) located on Fayetteville Street was remodelled to accommodate motor apparatus and the interior of the Victor Station, thus becoming Station No. 3, was renewed, but this station remained a horse-drawn hose-wagon station until the department was completely motorized in 1915.



Training Tower Behind Station One, 1912



Old and New Equipment Used in 1914

First Motorized Equipment

By February, 1913, all was in readiness for the arrival of the long-awaited motor apparatus which had been ordered in July, 1912, the first two pieces being painted white and trimmed with blue stripes and nickel-plated exposed metal parts. Raleigh, though not the first North Carolina city to purchase motor apparatus, was the first city in the state to purchase two such units at the same time.

Then the apparatus was delivered, the usual tests were made and, while these were satisfactory, many citizens were dubious, especially of their ability to perform in bad weather, Raleigh having very few paved streets at the time, but this doubt was short lived as the first run made by these two motor trucks in the response to an actual alarm of fire was to the Murphey School where the lives of over three hundred Raleigh children and teachers were endangered in a burning two-story wooden building.

This run made through about two inches of snow over unpaved streets and in record time, established the motor fire apparatus in Raleigh and the performances of the Raleigh Fire Department at this fire was later recorded in John Kenlon's book, 'Fires and Firefighters,' as a contrast to the Collinswood School disaster, as not one child nor teacher was injured in the Murphey School fire, all drilling out, many over outside fire escapes, to safety. This fire also hastened the enactment of the present state law requiring fire drills in public school buildings.

As of March 7, 1913, all volunteer fire companies were declared "out of commission" and were not "allowed to respond to any alarm of fire as an organization of the Fire Department"; nor were they to be permitted the use of the city streets, nor connection to fire hydrants. During the same year, to make room for new (completed 1915) Wake County Courthouse, the building originally built in 1870 for the old volunteer Rescue Company was torn down and a new station was erected on Salisbury Street to accommodate professional Company No. 2.

Also that year, Chief Brockwell reported a serious lack of water pressure while fighting a fire at the *News and Observer's* West Martin Street building, following collapse of a water main from the water works. The continuing usefulness of one of the mid-19th century cisterns was proven during the event. It was pressed into use along with the old pumping engine to save the building. The City's renewed efforts to secure ownership and begin to improve the water works company were successful at about the same time. By now, there were 29 miles of pipe, 231 double hydrants, and pressure capability of 60 to 100 pounds.

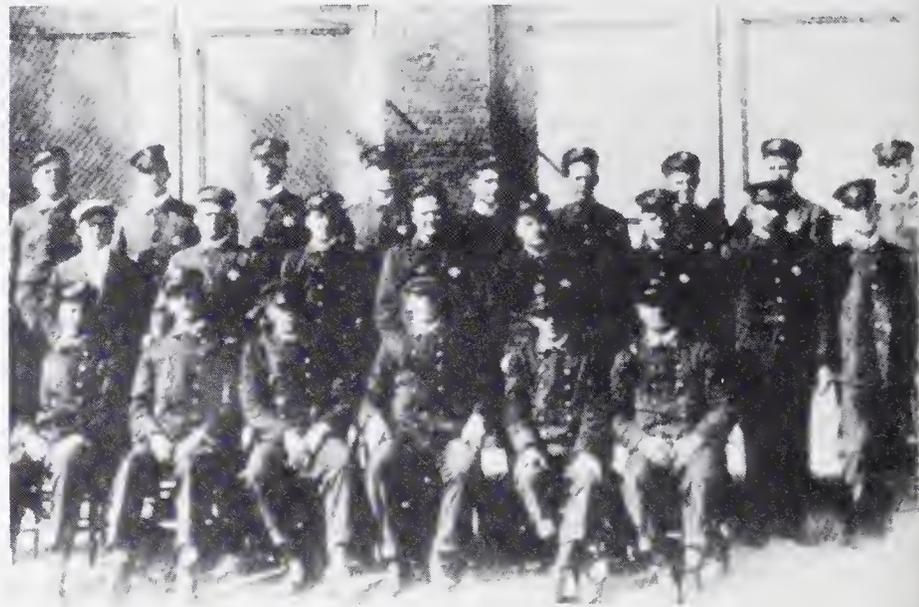
Chief Brockwell resigned, effective August 1, 1914, to become the State's first Fire Marshal. Charles D. Farmer was named Chief of the Raleigh Fire Department. Chief Farmer had been one of the first paid firemen and also previously a volunteer fireman.

Of the second phase of the professional Department's history the 1944 writers recalled:

A motor purchased in July, 1914, was delivered in 1915, the Raleigh Fire Department, by this addition, becoming completely motorized as the old Walter R. Womble Hook and Ladder Truck and the L.A. Mahler steam fire engine had been converted so as to be drawn by the motor apparatus.

It was with a feeling of profound regret that the people of Raleigh, many of whom had served with them, saw the last horse leave the fire station at Hargett and Blount Streets. Little has been written about these fine animals, but these horses were an integral part of the activities of the Raleigh Fire Department in fires and in contests from 1887 until 1915. Removing the horse from the fire service took 'something' — maybe of more or less sentimental value — but still 'something' away from the service which has yet to be replaced.

In February, 1916, the motor-propelled aerial truck was delivered. Again, as in the 'eighties' when the old ladder was installed, new interest in safety of life was emphasized and the Raleigh Department, this also at the suggestion of Mr. Alexander Webb, purchased a watchman's clock and established stations in the several hotels and hourly inspections of the floors of these hotels were made by members of the Fire Department. This service, which was considered original and of extreme importance and value, was discontinued during World War I.



Chief C. D. Farmer and Firefighters, 1916

The Raleigh Fire Department in 1916, with completely motorized equipment, including the seventy-five foot aerial truck, their reputation as highly trained men and featuring fire prevention in all of its activities, was considered an outstanding Department. As such, they invited the North Carolina Firemen's Association to hold their Convention and Tournament in Raleigh. This was destined to be one of the largest such conventions, but the Western North Carolina flood interfered, preventing the arrival of the western companies. The convention was held and the tournament, without participation of the western companies, was conducted adjacent to Moore Square upon which a temporary drill tower had been erected and members of the Raleigh Fire Department demonstrated their ability in the use of ladders, pompier and life belts to the visiting firemen. Another demonstration by the Raleigh Department at this time was reaching the top of the Citizens National Bank* via extension and pompier ladders and throwing water from the top of this building. The comparatively new 1,000 gallon pumper delivered a stream of water from the ground to the top of this building.*(Now NCNB Building)

A number of experienced men left the department in 1917 to join the armed forces in World War I and to enter shipyards and other war material-producing plants. The Raleigh Department, however, did not suffer serious manpower consequences, due to the custom, then, of allowing members of the armed forces sta-

ioned near Raleigh to occupy dormitories of the fire department. From Camp Polk came several experienced officers of large city fire departments, these including a Captain and several former members of the Buffalo, New York, department and several members of other large city departments.

Post-World War I Events

In 1919, Hubert H. Horton became Chief. During his tenure the original 1912 trucks were replaced by new pumping engines and a city service truck. Raleigh's postwar population was 24,418; and 920 annexations brought the area of the City to almost 7 square miles. An additional source of water was sorely needed; the City completed the Lake Johnson reservoir on Walnut Creek in 1923.

Under Chief Lewis F. Hicks, appointed in 1923 to succeed Chief Horton, the two-platoon system went into effect August 4, 1924. This arrangement meant that the men were on duty ten hours a day for four days and fourteen hours a night for four nights. The Department at this time was made up of a Chief, two Assistant Chiefs, and 37 men. By the mid-1920's, an estimated 10,000 new citizens had come into the city, necessitating employment of 16 additional firemen, purchase of two more pumping engines, and construction of two new fire stations. These were No. 4 at 505 Jefferson Street and No. 5 at 1914 Park Drive near Oberlin Road, both built in 1926.

In that year, W.E. Holland was named Chief. He had been with the Department since 1913, and held the top position until 1939, when he resigned to become Assistant Chief at Fort Bragg. Needing still more water, the City constructed a third pumping station in 1927 at Rand's Mill Pond on Swift Creek near Garner. Population growth continued; the 1930 census indicated a total of 17,379 in the City's area of 7.254 square miles.

The City Auditorium built in 1911 along with and adjacent to City Hall at Fayetteville and Davie Streets caught fire October 4, 1930, and burned to the ground in 1½ hours. It is generally



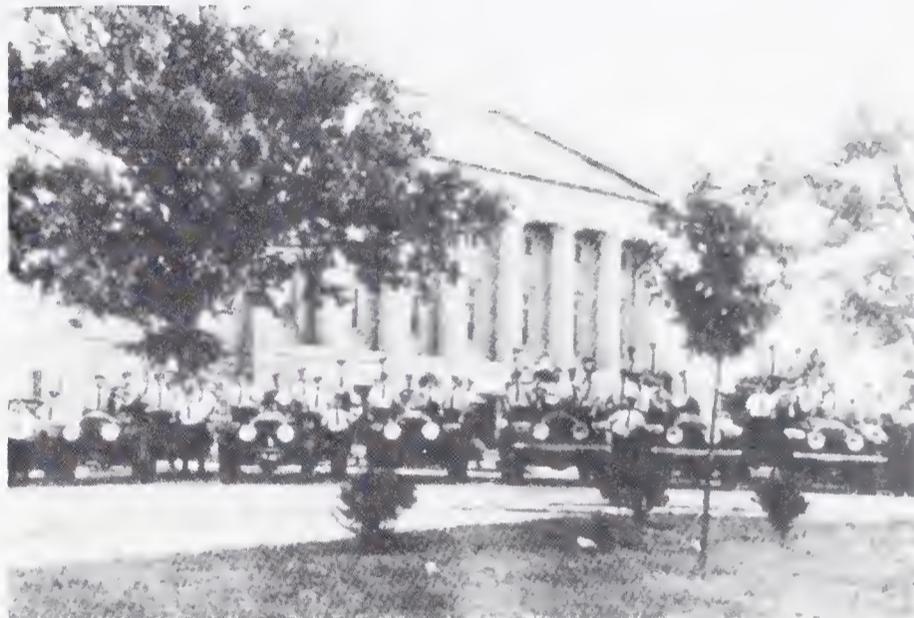
City Auditorium Fire, 1930

supposed that many municipal papers, including early Fire Department records, were lost in that fire. The Auditorium was replaced on another site by Memorial Auditorium, completed in 1932. During construction it was decided to include a fire station in the building. Company No. 2 moved into this station from its location on Salisbury Street; the City maintained ownership of the older station, using it for other purposes.

Civil Service Commission

An important event of the mid-1930's is described in the 1944 recollections:

Following what many termed a 'hectic' municipal election in 1935, at the request of the entire representation of Wake County in the General Assembly of that year (Senator Carroll Weathers, Representatives Mitchell, Douglas and Thompson), and at the urgent insistence of the entire membership of the Raleigh Fire Department, Sherwood Brockwell, representing the Fire Department with Hon. John W. Hinsdale, former State Senator and representing the Raleigh Police Department, prepared a bill to 'create a civil service commission' for the firemen and policemen of Raleigh and, after receiving able assistance in preparing the bill from Messrs. Carroll Weathers and James H. Pous Jr., Messrs. Hinsdale and Brockwell explained, discussed and defended the bill as written before several civic bodies, organizations and groups, some of whom openly opposed and/or attempted to add provisions. The bill, substantial as originally written for the firemen and policemen, was introduced in the General Assembly by Senator Carroll Weathers and enacted into State Law. The members of the first Civil Service Commission under the provisions of this law were: James E. Briggs, representing the Police Department; James H. Pou, Jr., representing the City Commissioners; Sherwood Brockwell, representing the Raleigh Fire Department; James M. Peden, representing the Chamber of Commerce and kindred organizations of Raleigh; and Miss Elsie Riddick, representing the Women's Club and the Business and Professional Women of Raleigh. James H. Pou, Jr. was elected chairman and Miss Elsie Riddick was elected Secretary.



Personnel and Equipment, 1936

In due time, the members of the Raleigh Fire Department became affiliated with the American Federation of Labor and organized the membership into Local Chapter No. 548 of the International Association of Firefighters.

In 1936, the Raleigh Fire Department was again host to the North Carolina Firemen's Association and the convention in the new Memorial Auditorium was an eventful one, both for the Association and the Raleigh Fire Department. The tournament of 1936 was conducted on Oberlin Road near Fire Station No. 5.

Raleigh Chief as NCFCA President

At that convention, W.E. Holland was elected President, the first Raleigh Fire Chief to hold that position in more than 45 years. He was succeeded as Raleigh Chief on May 10, 1939, by Ellis D. King.

According to the 1940 Census, the Raleigh Fire Department was now serving 46,897 citizens. In that year the Department of Public Utilities completed a filter plant on the Old Fayetteville Road, which included the pumping station delivering water to the City. This facility is still part of the system serving Raleigh today.

W. Ralph Butts was appointed Chief July 14, 1941, and served through the war years, until 1947.

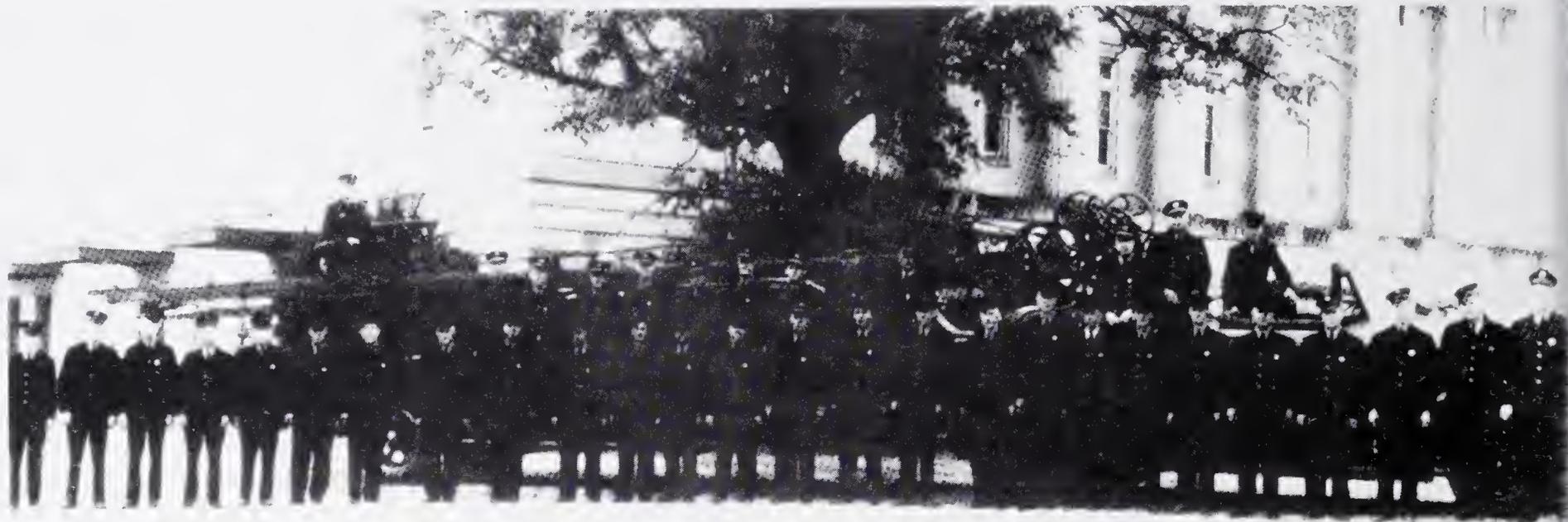
World War II

Of the first two years of World War II the writers recording the Department's history in 1944 stated:

Raleigh, keeping its fire department abreast of the times, following an election (1941) extending the city limits made preliminary plans for broad expansion of this Department, this to include several new fire stations, extending the fire alarm system, increasing the number of firemen and more modern apparatus and had purchased property on which to erect two new fire stations when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. This, of course, altered all plans of expansion, but a temporary fire station, Sta-

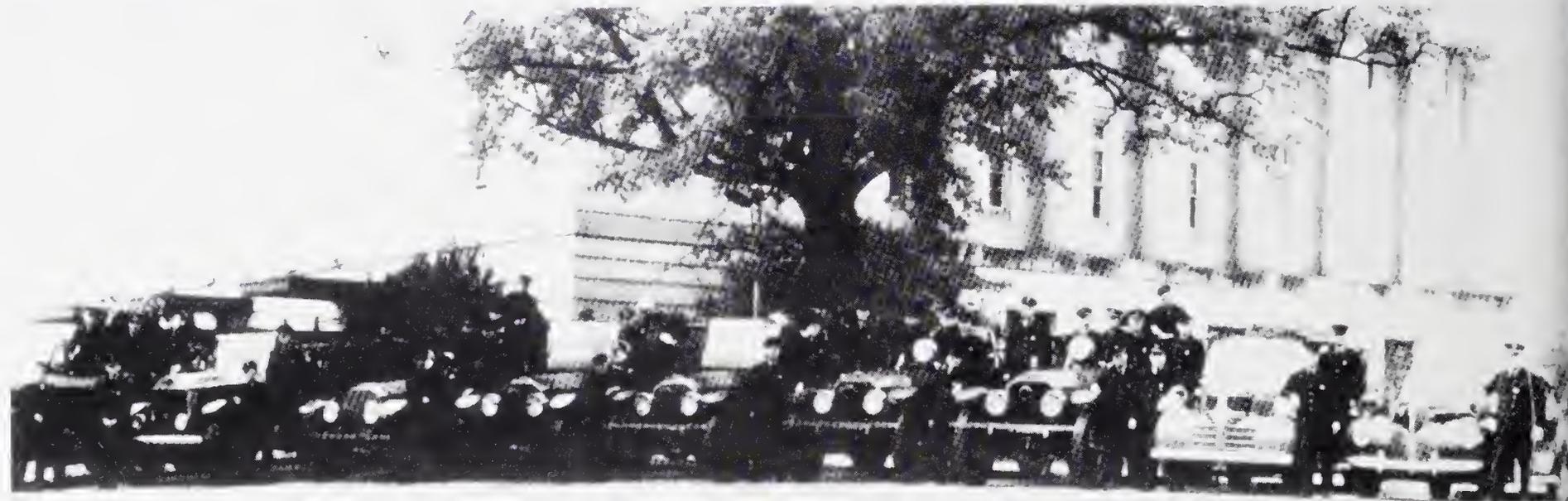
returned to their duty with these added responsibilities. The Raleigh Department at once commenced a program of training auxiliary firemen and in this line of endeavor Captain J.M. Burnette and Lieutenant J.B. Keeter, with the assistance of other members of the Fire Department and Officers of the local OCI have rendered valuable service.

The ranks of the Fire Department had been thinned by the demands of war. Ten of its staff had served in the Armed Forces and approximately 30 had taken jobs critical to the war effort. New apparatus was not available because of the need to supply the Armed Forces. The Fire Department had to make do with what it had for the duration of the war.



Above — 75 Foot Aerial Ladder, 1942

Below — Other Equipment and Personnel, 1942



tion No. 6, was opened in the Budleigh Section in 1943 and a new house for the fire alarm system was completed in 1942. In the meantime, to make room for expansion of the State Revenue Department Building, the Fire Department Headquarters Station, erected in 1892, was abandoned and torn down, the temporary Headquarters being established in the station originally built on Salisbury Street to accommodate No. 2.

With the outbreak of World War II, representatives of the Raleigh Fire Department, on December 10, 1941, attended a meeting with firemen from practically all of the Fire Departments of the State in the House of Representatives in the State Capitol where they received instructions from the State Fire Marshal and Conductor of the North Carolina Fire College and Drill School, who had just returned after graduating from the school conducted by the United States Army at Edgewood Arsenal, and

On the resignation of Chief Butts in 1947, A.B. Lloyd, who had joined the Fire Department July 26, 1919, became Chief. He served until his death in 1955. During Chief Lloyd's tenure, three new stations were built to replace older structures. (These will be named subsequently.)

Council-Manager City Government

Raleigh voters in 1947 adopted the Council-Manager form of municipal government, with all departments (including the Fire Department) answerable to the first City Manager, Roy S. Braden. Serving that year as members of the Policemen's and Firemen's Civil Service Commission were A.V. Anderson, Bank Arendell, E.J. Kuetter, J.C. Little, Jr., and Elsie Riddick, who was still serving as Secretary.

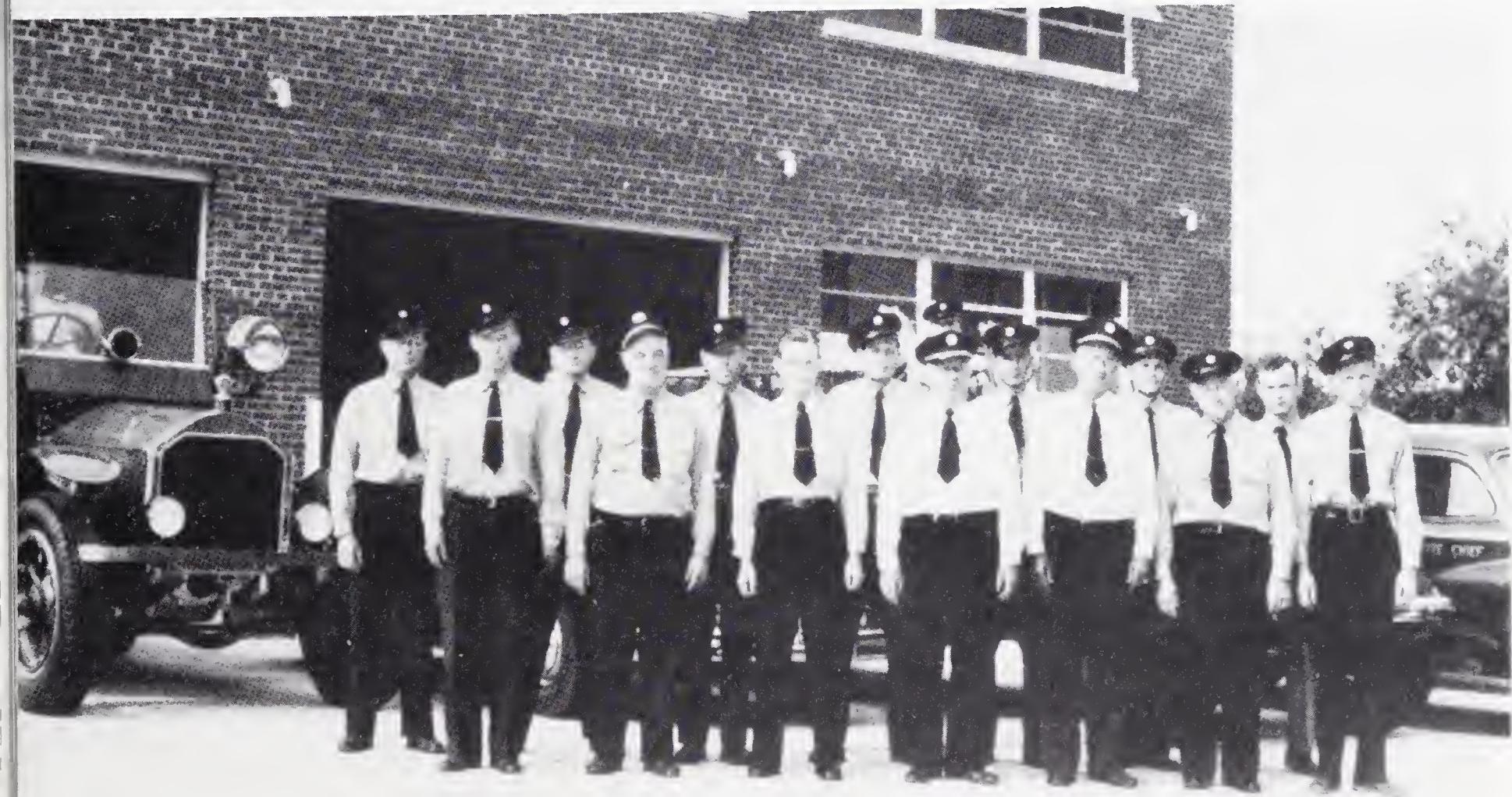
The Fire Department, as described in the June 1948 report on the first year of the Council-Manager government, consisted of the Chief, an Assistant Chief, 51 firemen, and three women P.B.X. Operators." Responding out of six fire stations were six pumpers, two ladder trucks, and two fire cars. Manager Braden considered the Department "badly undermanned, under-equipped, and poorly housed," but announced plans underway for improving fire stations, adding apparatus, and increasing manpower. This report also noted that of the 816 fire alarms turned in during the year, "79 were FALSE and 45 were unnecessary." The report cautioned, "The citizens of Raleigh must realize that the department cannot operate efficiently with so many unnecessary false alarms, and we must realize that a false alarm can easily be the means of causing accidents and deaths. Every effort is being made to have this practice stopped." The addition of 15 fire hydrants brought the total number in the City to 97. During the 1940's, the Department started putting increased emphasis on fire prevention. The 1948 report noted that "in schools, civic clubs and other places, the doctrine of fire prevention was presented by moving pictures, lectures, printed circulars, and house-to-house inspections, accomplishing a great deal."

The City's most tragic fire to date, in terms of lost lives, was the February 1, 1948 blaze that killed a family of five when the Carolina Country Club burned.

The permanent building for Station No. 6 was completed in 1949 at 2601 Fairview Road at the Oberlin Road intersection, designed as a two-company station. It was at this time that the City purchased its first fire pumper since the beginning of World War II, a 1950 Mack.

Raleigh's slow but steady growth had begun to accelerate at a more rapid pace during and following the war. In an area of 10.883 square miles, 20,000 persons had come into the City, bringing the total to 65,679 as reported in the 1950 census. The Fire Department was also growing in numbers, with 83 personnel on its rolls in that year. Fire-fighters' duty hours were 24 hours on and 24 hours off at this time. This schedule meant that each was on duty 84 hours per week. Firemen moved into the new Station No. 3 in the summer of 1951. This station, at 13 South East Street, was built at a cost of \$35,000 to replace old No. 3 that had stood at the corner of Blount and Hargett Streets since the 1890's. The new two-story brick structure was to house one of the two American La France pumpers delivered at about the same time, with the other one going to Station No. 5.

A part of Fire Department history vanished the following year when old No. 3 was acquired by Carolina Motor Sales Company and demolished to make room for a used car lot. During the demolition, former Chief Sherwood Brockwell told a *News and Observer* reporter that the building had been the first Raleigh station house which vehicles could enter from the rear and exit forward.



New Fire Station Six, 1949

CENTRAL FIRE STATION



New Central Station, 1953

New Headquarters

A new headquarters fire station was completed in October 1953 and the fire department "moved in," fulfilling a long-time dream since losing the 1892 building on West Morgan Street. This building located at 220 South Dawson Street was constructed next to the remaining portion of the old 1892 Union Railroad Depot. Headquarters had spent 13 years in temporary quarters at 412 South Salisbury Street. The cost of the new Station No. 1 was \$122,000.

In October of the same year, the old Steamer that had served Raleigh so well from 1887 until 1915, was pulled by two horses down Fayetteville Street once again to commemorate Fire Prevention Week. The old hose reel was also pulled by hand in the parade.

On the death of Chief Lloyd in 1955, J.B. Keeter was named new Chief of Raleigh's Fire Department. Chief Keeter had joined the Fire Department in 1931 and had been promoted through the ranks to Assistant Chief in 1952.

For a number of years, beginning at Station No. 1, in November 1955, Sunday School Classes were held in Fire Stations Nos. 1, 5, 7, and 9. These classes were assisted by a number of area churches. Another event of 1955 was formation of the Wake County Firemen's Association on November 23.

Radios, Rescue Squads

Under Chief Keeter, two-way radios were installed on all equipment with the base station being located in the Dispatcher's Room at Headquarters Station. This was initially, and is today, a valuable tool to the fire service. Previously, when apparatus left the station on a fire run or whatever, it was out of service until it returned to quarters. Two-way radio keeps the company in service ready to respond to an alarm regardless of its location. For fire inspection, pre-fire planning, or when traveling to and from fires, constant contact can be maintained with the apparatus.

Also under Chief Keeter's direction, the Raleigh Rescue Squad, Inc. was established to contribute an essential service to the citizens of Raleigh. The fire department today maintains two Rescue Units, located at Stations No. 6 and No. 7, to assist at fires or any emergencies that arise where they are needed.

Station No. 7, the new station added to serve the northeast portion of Raleigh, was completed at 2100 Glascock Street and occupied in 1959. The building, a one-level brick station, marked

the beginning of the end for the traditional firemen's pole that had been used in two-story fire stations for so long. All Raleigh stations built since then have been of the one-story class.

Raleigh continued to grow, with 20 annexations adding almost 8 square miles during the 1950's, bringing the total size to 35.763 square miles occupied by 93,931 citizens. On April 1, 1960, the Fire Department began utilizing a rented structure on Kent Road as temporary quarters for Engine No. 8. These quarters served the newly annexed Western Boulevard area until a new station could be built. In 1960 the original structure that had served as Station No. 5 at Oberlin Road and Park Drive since 1926 was demolished and a new modern building constructed on the same lot. This is a two-company station. Three new American La France pumpers were purchased and delivered in 1961 to enhance Raleigh's fire-fighting capabilities.

Reporting for duty on February 14, 1963, was the first black member of the Fire Department since abandonment of volunteer companies in 1912. Chief Keeter indicated at the time that he was looking for additional qualified blacks to apply and that others would be hired. Others did follow and have been assigned to positions throughout the ranks of the Fire Department.

The year 1963 saw three new stations constructed and occupied. The new Station No. 4, located at 2913 Wake Forest Road, replaced the old No. 4 of Jefferson Street which had served the City since about 1925. Station No. 8, located at 5001 Western Boulevard, replaced the former rented structure on Kent Road. To serve the North Hills area, Station No. 9, which is an additional, not replacement station, is located at 4465 Six Forks Road. Three stations cost an average of approximately \$63,000 each. A 1964 GMC Truck is now in service at Station No. 8.

The Fire Prevention Bureau, now Codes and Standards Division, was enlarged to 6 full-time personnel in 1963. This step was taken to permit more frequent inspections throughout the City and more presentations of programs on fire education and fire awareness to citizens of the community. While Fire Prevention is a year-round effort now, Fire Prevention Week Activities still add a little more meaning through national media attention during that special week in October. During Fire Prevention Week in 1963 and 1964, contests were held between Raleigh and Winston Salem Departments and between Raleigh and Durham Departments in 1965 and 1966. The winner each year was the City with the lesser amount of fire damage during Fire Prevention Week. The Raleigh Department won in each of the four years.

Firemen's Club

The Raleigh Firemen's Club, Inc., was organized in September 1968. John Hester was named president; A.R. Woodlief, Vice-president; Ned K. Perry, Secretary; L.T. Frazier, Treasurer; and Ellis Beasley, Sergeant-at-Arms. Among early accomplishments was completion of a clubhouse on a tract of land off Six Forks Road, approximately 9 miles from the North Hills Shopping Center. It is still active today as the Firemen's Club, serving its membership.

Firemen moved into the new Fire Station No. 2 at 263 Pecan Road on October 16, 1969. Men and apparatus were relocated to the new quarters from the rear of the Memorial Auditorium where the station had been since completion of the Auditorium in 1932. Also built onto this station was the maintenance garage for the Fire Department, employing three full-time mechanics whose responsibilities are to keep the fire apparatus in order.

The report for the fire department in 1969 indicated that the Fire Department consisted of 169 men including 133 Firemen and 6 Company Captains. Nine Stations housed the 10 engine companies and four ladder companies operating on the two-platoon system. Each man worked 24 hours during his assigned shift, with an average work week of 66 hours. The Fire Prevention Bureau that year reported presenting some 175 fire safety programs to schools, hospitals, and civic groups, while distributing nearly 10,000 pieces of literature aimed at encouraging fire safety practices.

Residency Rule, Work Week

In February 1969, the City Council changed the residency rule that had required Raleigh firemen to live within the City limits; firemen were now permitted to live anywhere in Wake County, with the stipulation that they reside on a paved road and that their telephones are connected to the Raleigh exchange. The City reduced firefighters' work week from 66 to 60 hours in September 1970. This was the second reduction within a year for firemen, the first having reduced it from 72 to 66 hours per week. The present 56 hours per week represents a total reduction from 84 hours in 1950.

The 1960's decade added 25,137 square miles to the City with 17 annexations bringing the total area to 43,763 square miles and the population to 122,830. Two new stations completed in 1971 helped to meet the growing City's growing needs: No. 10 at 2711

Sanderford Road and No. 11 at 2925 Glenridge Road. These are both two-company stations. Three new Mack fire pumpers (two 1970 and one 1971) were acquired and put into service, as well as a ladder truck mounted on a 1971 Chevrolet chassis, the latter being in service at Station No. 11.

Massive Reorganization

As part of a massive reorganization of Fire Department administration, Chief Keeter named on August 7, 1971, seven District Chiefs. These included D.H. Williams (the only one of the seven still active in 1984), W.B. Hamilton, R.E. Keith, W.R. Mabrey, N.W. Walker, C.T. May, and S. J. Talton.

For many years, the Raleigh Fire Department operated its own dispatching and switchboard service with its own employees. In February 1972, the City of Raleigh/Wake County Emergency Communications Center was established. The planners designated 829-1911 as the common number for everyone within Wake County, in anticipation of the nationally designated number 911 which became available January 26, 1982. This is the number used by most emergency services in Wake County.

Chief J.B. Keeter retired in June 1973 after 42 years in service. To succeed him, City Manager William H. Carpenter appointed a veteran fire-fighter who also rose through the ranks, former Assistant Chief C.R. Puryear. A native of Norfolk, Virginia, Chief Puryear had been in Raleigh for 44 years.

Raleigh's fire department continued to grow in stations and apparatus. During Chief Puryear's tenure three new stations were dedicated: No. 12 on Poole Road, No. 14 on Lake Boone Trail, and No. 15 on Spring Forest Road. During 1974 the City acquired four new Mack pumpers.

It came as a real shock to the fire service when Chief Puryear, Chief for just 17 months, died in November 1974 of an apparent heart attack. The Chief was 55 years old and veteran of 33 years in the Fire Department.

Rufus E. Keith, a native Wake Countian, was chosen by City Manager L.P. Zachary to succeed Chief Puryear. Chief Keith, as had his predecessor, had come up through the ranks. He had joined the Fire Department in July 1951 and had served in all ranks including Training Officer.

Other officers were promoted to District Chief positions and the presently used three-district system was instituted to replace the former two-district system that had been in effect since 1971. Four additional Mack pumpers were ordered and delivered during the year 1975.

Committee For Rescue Truck, 1952





Emergency Rescue, 1955

EMT and First Responder Programs

It was in 1976-1977 that Raleigh instituted the Emergency Medical Technician Program and the First Responder Program. Special training of instructors for the EMT program was first; then came long hours of special training for all firemen. Raleigh participated in a pilot program sponsored by the International Association of Fire-fighters and the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

The First Responder emergency system in 1977 mandated that the nearest fire engine to an emergency responds to every call from within the City involving a life-threatening situation. All responding vehicles carry personnel trained as Emergency Medical Technicians.

Delivery of the first platform aerial truck by Mack was made in 1977. This 75-foot platform truck, costing \$175,000, has excellent capabilities for fire-fighting and rescue. A 1978 Mack pumper was purchased and delivered in 1978.

Training of Fire Department officers to conduct in-service in-

spections of all types of occupancies began in February 1978, including pre-fire planning. This is now an on-going, effective effort by all officers and companies.

Eight women joined the Raleigh Fire Department in June 1978 as Raleigh's first female Fire-fighters.

Station No. 16, at 5526 Leadmine Road, opened to serve the public February 9, 1979, with one pumper and one ladder truck assigned to it.

During the decade of the 1970's, 72 annexations added 10,933 square miles to the City, enlarging Raleigh's size to 54,696 square miles and her 1980 census count to 150,255 persons. Two additional truck companies were placed in service following delivery of a 1980 ladder truck on a Ford chassis and a Mack truck. Another Mack pumper was purchased and delivered in 1981; and two Mack pumpers in 1982.

The year 1981 brought a major program of the Department into service. This was the expansion of inspections of places of public assembly, including entertainment establishments. This program was designed to assure continued compliance with Fire Prevention Codes in buildings where large numbers of people congregate.

Keeter Training Center

In May 1982, the 7,000-square-foot Keeter Training Center was completed. A bronze plaque on the wall of the foyer indicates its dedication to the memory of the former Fire Chief. The center is located at 105 W. Hoke Street, where the Department's training tower had been constructed 28 years earlier, in 1954.

Chief R.E. Keith announced his intention to retire in November of 1982. At the request of City Manager Zachary, he stayed on as Chief until a successor was appointed. For the first time in Raleigh's history, the Chief's position was opened to persons outside the Raleigh Fire Department. Thomas T. Kuster became Chief of the Department February 1, 1983.

In June 1983, the Department initiated its Home Inspection program with a goal of inspecting or offering to inspect every residence in the City. Special emphasis is being placed on home fire drills, smoke detectors, and protection of invalids.

Hazardous materials of many kinds are presenting problems throughout the country as they are involved in wrecks, derailments, and spills. Equipment, apparatus, and special tools have been acquired and training is being conducted to prepare Firemen to deal with potentially serious incidents involving hazardous materials.

1984

Within the first half of the decade of the 1980's, 43 annexations brought 6,552 square miles into the City, increasing the total area protected by the Raleigh Fire Department to 61,248 square miles. The population as of July 1, 1984, was estimated at 172,198. A few weeks earlier, the City's sixteenth fire station, No. 17 on Pleasant Valley Road, was opened.

Kept in readiness for service are the following units and equipment as of August 1984: 17 engine companies, 3 truck companies, 3 service companies, 2 rescue units, 2 water tankers, 1 light truck, 2 foam units, 1 brush truck, 1 fuel truck, and 1 hazardous materials truck. The Department's 291 fire-fighters include 81 officers — Chief, Assistant Chiefs, Training Officers, Company Officers, and Fire Prevention Officers. There are 13 women in fighter positions. In addition, 19 persons are employed in administration, 6 in fire prevention, and 3 in the mechanics division.

Today's modern, progressive Fire Department stands in readiness to protect the City of Raleigh. The Fire Department is prepared in all phases of Fire Protection Service and continually puts forth efforts to improve these services. Raleigh Fire Department has met the challenge of the past and now accepts the challenge of the future to provide the best possible service to the citizens of the City of Raleigh.

Fire Chief Appointed

In July 1985, the salary for the position of fire fighter was \$15,388 per year, based on 56 hours per week. Chief Sherman Pickard became the 13th paid chief of the department on March 3, 1986, after Chief Thomas Kuster resigned this position. Later in 1986 the department placed 3 mini-pumpers into service at stations 3, 9, & 17. The year closed with issue of sleeve patches for the departmental uniform.

Additional Stations Open

Station 18 at 8200 Morgans Way opened in 1987. In December of that year, Trucks 5 and 12 were removed from service and Truck 15 placed in service. The department employed 340 personnel with 85 square miles of land area.

Station 19 opened in 1988 at 4209 Spring Forest Road. Also that year, the Special Risk Unit was placed in service at Station 1. This unit being used as a mobile air cascade-compressor system, and an incident command module. Foam Unit 12, a converted American LaFrance pumper, was placed into service at Station 12. This unit carries a large supply of foam for use throughout the city.

Three major incidents occurred this year. On June 21 the Piggly Wiggly grocery store at Five Points near Glenwood Avenue caught fire. On December 2, another three alarm fire struck the dry cleaners store at Five Points on Glenwood Avenue.

On November 28th a tornado touched down in Umstead Park near Interstate 40. The tornado tore a path northeast through the city and to Franklin County. In Wake County alone, and primarily the City of Raleigh, two people were killed and 105 injured. 10 businesses and 105 homes/apartments were destroyed. 29 businesses and 1440 homes/apartments were damaged. 800 people were left homeless and the property loss value was placed at \$60,000,000.

Station 20 at 1721 Trailwood opened on January 20, 1989. Later that year the fire department administration and fire prevention/inspection offices moved to the Professional Building at the corner of Hargett and McDowell Streets. The fire prevention/inspection division also added a fulltime public fire educator.



New Decade

The year 1990 saw the City of Raleigh with a population of 223,300 in 92 square miles. There were 362 personnel in the department with a yearly budget of \$14,000,000.

The hazardous materials unit was relocated to Station 20 from Station 2 during 1990. The team received its Emergency One truck in 1991, and the 1977 Chevy step van became the decon/confined space vehicle. The first two fully enclosed cab engines, now a departmental standard, provide safety and comfort for all personnel with enclosed riding positions. Lee Wilson, well known by the majority of the personnel, started taking photographs in May 1990. His determination and dedication to the department has provided us with an extensive photograph record of the recent history of the department. It has become a very common sight to see Lee at emergency incidents throughout the city taking pictures.

In March 18, 1990 a deliberate fire was set in the court rooms on the fourth floor of the Wake County Courthouse on Fayetteville Street Mall. 191 prisoners were evacuated from the jail.

After a tragic fire in September of 1991 that took the lives of 25 workers at an industrial building fire in Hamlet, North Carolina changes were made to the way the fire inspection division did business. In October of that year, the State of North Carolina adopted the state wide fire prevention code. Part of this code required certification of fire inspectors which heightened awareness in life safety.

Rescue 6 and 7 received identical Chevy/Kodiak rigs which replaced two very tired 1975 and 1974 model ambulance's. The Special Risk Unit was relocated to Station 5 all during 1991.

The year 1992 saw the department's first fire protection engineer and Battalion Chief (shift supervisor) was placed into service at Station 1. On September 25, 1992 the position of engineer was changed to Lieutenant. This year also saw two major fires in the city. On August 22, a 100 year old building on the campus of Shaw University burned. The Cosmopolitan Building located at 600 South Bloodworth Street required three alarms to control. On December 20, the IGA grocery store at 718 North Person Street caught fire. This also required three alarms.



More Notable Fires

On May 24, 1993 three alarms were sounded for the Cameron Village area. The Bryan Building at 2113 Cameron Street burned. A parking deck that surrounded the structure made access to the fire difficult.

On the Fourth of July, 1993 a fire started in a apartment building at 3114 Avent Ferry Road. Six of eight units in the two story building were destroyed. The temperature was 95 degrees farenheit with the heat index at 103. Three alarms were called plus many specials due to the heat, which took it's toll on the fire fighters.

On September 9, 1993 a fire broke out at 750 Bashford Road in a two story wood frame townhouse structure. Four units were destroyed and twelve people were left homeless.

Also in 1993 , Station 4 relocated to 121 Northway Court on June 23. Captain Eudy , the cities hazardous materials coordinator, moved to old Station 4 at 2917 Wake Forest Road in the fall of 1993. This building became known as the Career Development Center. This year also brought a work schedule change to fire prevention/inspection division. They changed from a five day workweek to four. On October 29, 1993 the 32 foot long fire safety house was delivered. This valuable vehicle has been used hundreds of times to educate children in home fire safety.

Funeral
procession
Chief C.R.
Puryear
11/74



On Thanksgiving weekend, 1993 the department instituted the emergency medical technician defibrillator program. Each engine, truck and rescue now carries an external semi-automatic defibrillator designed to shock ventricular fibrillation and pulseless ventricular tachycardia. These units have been credited with several confirmed saves during the first few years of use.

On April 20, 1994, a fire started in room 319 of the Sir Walter Hotel Fayetteville Street. Heavy Smoke filled the 70 year old Raleigh Landmark as 135 residents were evacuated.

On May 10, 1994 a tragic fire took the lives of three children at 717 Church Street. Two boys ages 7 and 8, and a girl 12, perished in the blaze.

November 7, 1994, Bill Gardner was hired as an addition to the service's division, and in December of that year, the department started training in the area of confined space and trench rescue. The fire administration and the fire prevention/inspection divisions moved into the Dillon Building at Martin and Dawson Streets during 1994.

Ice Storm/Hurricane Fran

The year 1995 showed a population of 249,332 people in the city, covering an area of 97 square miles. There were 369 personnel in the department. On July 1 1995, Jonny Sandy would become the 14th paid chief to lead the Raleigh Fire Department. Also in July that year, the department started the department's computer system that went into full operation on January 1, 1996.

On February 2, 1996 on a cold stormy night three children ages 3, 6, and 9 died in a two alarm fire at 462 Dorthea Drive. The two story apartment building had one unit well involved. Fire fighters made a rescue of a 4 year old boy, but despite there best efforts, he would die on May 13 from his injuries.

As dawn broke this morning (February 2) Raleigh was in the midst of one of it's worst ice storms, B shift reported to duty that morning and logged a record breaking 299 calls during there 24 hour shift. The historical average up to this point was 52 runs per 24 hours.

May 4, 1996 brought a major response to 4004 Twickenham Court. A three story wood frame apartment building had eight of twelve units destroyed. The access was very difficult, and due to the location of the building, no aerial devices were used.

Thursday night, September 5, 1996 Hurricane Fran struck. The eye of the storm passed over Cary, and the highest recorded wind gust ever at the Raleigh- Durham Airport was at 79 miles per hour. The damage in the city was massive. Thousands of homes were damaged or destroyed by fallen trees. Large sections of the city, including fire stations, were without electricity for days. This was the first time since the tornado in November of 1988 that all three shifts were called to duty. From 1800 hours September 5th to 2100 hours September 8th, the department responded to 690 recorded calls. Especially in the early morning hours of September 6, the number of calls will never be known.

Engine 3 once again broke response records in 1996 with 2307 runs.



Roma Wilder, Bill Sykes, & Harold Jones - Commander

1997 was a busy year. In March the renovations to the Keeter Training Center were completed. These additions, which included classroom and office space upstairs, and storage downstairs, shall furnish the needed space for the training division well into the century. By the spring 1997 the training division went to a four day work week, similar to that in the fire prevention/inspection division.

On May 5th, the highest level of training paid off. Two window washers on the public safety center were rescued after their equipment malfunctioned. Four days later, on May 9, the confined space rescue team was activated for the first time for a worker trapped in a manhole near the Memorial Auditorium. All victims on these incidents recovered fully thanks to the efforts of these two teams.

On September 1, 1997 the rapid intervention team (RIT) response was activated. This provides a team of fire fighters to standby at the scene of all working fires, to go into action the moment a fire fighter gets into trouble. This required the response of a third engine company on all working fires. On April 15, 1998 that was changed to two trucks, which were better equipped to handle RIT duties.

Also on September 1, the Career Development Center (Old Fire Station 4) on Wake Forest Road was sold, and Captain Eudy moved his office to the public works facility on West Street.

The communications center started the Emergency Medical Dispatched procedures in the Fall of 1997. This procedure allows the telecommunicators to initiate life saving medical aid over the phone. It also allows the telecommunicators to relay more specifically the exact nature of medical calls.

The insurance services office (ISO) was in town during December grading the cities fire defenses.

March 8 brought the adoption of the O.S.H.A. law commonly referred to as "two-in-two-out" which maintains a group of fire fighters on standby status during emergency incidents. The law allowed fire departments a six-month period to develop and implement a plan to comply with this standard. On October 8, the law went into effect. The department hired an additional 21 fire fighters to meet the standard and all single company stations on the perimeter of the city would be staffed with four fire fighters at all times. This would allow for two groups of two fire fighters to be available immediately on arrival of a emergency incident when a IDLH atmosphere is encountered.

On March 14 a large woods fire started in the 6600 block of Leesville Road. 68 fire fighters from several departments responded. From Raleigh 7 Engines, 2 rescues, 3 chiefs, 2 mini pumpers responded. 3 EMS units, 3 engines, 2 tankers, 2 brush units from Six Forks, Durham- Highway, and Fairgrounds Fire Department assisted along with the several units from the forestry service.

Three alarms were dispatched to 5645 Western Blvd. during the night of May 3rd while "B" shift was working. The Scramble Dog Inn, a very popular local bar, burned to the ground in a spectacular fire.

Fire Station 21 at 2651 South Hall Road opened on June 15, as did Fire Station 22 at 9350 Durant Road on July 31.

A shift was on duty December the 18th when a gasoline tanker collided with a parked truck on the Beltline between Capital Blvd and Wake Forest Road. Several thousand gallons of gasoline ignited creating a huge fireball. Several alarms were called with multiple tankers from volunteer departments. The Raleigh-Durham Airport sent one of their foam trucks to assist.

B shift was on duty December 28th when three alarms were dispatched to 5046 Falls of Neuse Road at the Quail Corners Shopping Center. This had been the site of a previous multi-alarm fire also on B shift. Four truck companies were set up during the fire.

1999 Chief Earl Fowler became the cities 15th fire chief in August having taken the reins over from Jonny Sandy.

The Rapid Intervention Team (RIT) was changed from a second truck to a third engine on all structure fire responses. This allowed for a quicker response to the scene for the team.

2000

As the new millennium came upon the department, RFD continued to face many changes. As the city has grown in the area the fire department has had to keep up with an ever-increasing demand for service.

On February 14 the City of Raleigh Fire Department became the first fire department in the State of North Carolina to operate a permanent fitting station for child safety seats. This program sponsored by the Governors Highway Safety Plan and North Carolina Safe Kids educates adults in the correct installation of child safety within vehicles.

On February 15 Fire Station 23 at 8312 Pinecrest Road opened. It shared quarters with Durham-Highway Fire department.

May 21 brought a three-alarm fire to 2423 Wycliff Road on A shift. The fire heavily damaged a large two-story wood frame apartment building.

Car 51 received a Ford "Expedition" in the summer of 2000. This sport utility vehicle has turned out to be very practical for the district chiefs.

To help meet demands two new rescue trucks were placed in service in May 2000 to replace the older units. Cars 52, 53, and 195 received Ford "Excursions" and Engine 23 was assigned a Quint. Engine 23's quint is a first in Raleigh and a new concept for the department.

On September 6 several alarms were dispatched to 113 South Wilmington Street. An 80 year old building housing several businesses burned. This was the largest fire in downtown in several years. C shift was on duty and relieved by A shift.

The year 2000 also brought about a change in the way we at RFD look. In July the Standard Uniform Regulations were altered to allow the wearing of "golf shirts". The "blue" and "white" shirts were regulated to dress uniform or class "A" use only.

2001

The Raleigh Fire Department continued to evolve and expand during 2001. In July station 25 on Wakefield Crossing Drive was opened and the following month station 24 on Fossil Creek Court near RDU was opened as well.

A third rescue truck was added in July to provide better coverage for the city. A new SR truck is scheduled to arrive in March 2002.

On August 7th A shift responded to a large substation fire in the downtown area. This fire presented an unusual challenge for RFD, as there are many hazards associated with electrical fires. RFD and CP&L combined to extinguish the fire and prevent further loss to the substation.

In perhaps the most devastating event in U.S. history, the terrorist's attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon brutally reminded all of us how dangerous and unpredictable firefighting can be. The entire department stood in shock as we watched these events unfold. Enormous civilian casualties along with the deaths of hundreds of brother firefighters in New York filled us all with disbelief and unrelenting sadness.

Flags flew at half-staff and all personnel wore American pins to commemorate the victims. Many volunteered to go to New York and help should the need arise. RFD responded by initiating a fundraiser for the FDNY. Many thousands of dollars were raised through the efforts of the men and women of this department.

Vital statistics for the City of Raleigh for the year 2000: Population 286,834. Square miles: 110. City budget 280 million dollars. 2000-2001 fire department budget: 27 million dollars. There are 460 authorized positions within the department. Fire fighter pay ranged from \$27,850 to \$42,995 thanks to several public safety pay raises issued by the city council over the last few years.

The department runs with 25 engine companies, 5 truck companies, 3 rescue units, a foam unit truck, 1 mobile air unit, 2 brush trucks, 2 hazardous materials response units, and a fire investigation van out of 24 fire stations. Plans are to open stations 26 and 27 during 2002.





Andrew Johnson Hotel Fire
2/10/71



Pine State Fire
10/70



North Hills Apartment Fire
9/7/70

Former Chiefs



Sherwood Brockwell



Charles D. Farmer



Hubert H. Horton



Lewis F. Hicks



W.E. Holland

Sherwood Brockwell 1912-1914

Charles D. Farmer 1914-1919

Hubert H. Horton 1919-1923

Lewis F. Hicks 1923-1926

W. Ernest Holland 1926-1939

Ellis D. King 1939-1941

W.R. Butts 1941-1947

Alvin B. Lloyd 1947-1955

Jack B. Keeter 1955-1973

Clearance R. Puryear 1973-1974

Rufus E. Keith 1974-1982

Thomas T. Kuster 1982-1986

Sherman A. Pickard 1986-1995

Jonny B. Sandy 1995-1999

Picture
Not
Available

Ellis D. King



W.R. Butts



Alvin B. Lloyd



Jack B. Keeter



Clearance R. Puryear



Rufus E. Keith



Thomas T. Kuster



Sherman A. Pickard



Jonny B. Sandy