

CHIEF MULLEN RESIGNS AND QUILTS JOB AT ONCE

Takes Early Action So That Cole May Pass on Pension Application.



EX-CHIEF JOHN A. MULLEN.

Stirred by Quincy House Alarms Just as He Retires, But Stays at Home With Family.

McDonough's Appointment as Chief Looked Upon as Certain.

John A. Mullen ceased to be chief of the Boston Fire Department at 9 o'clock last night. He decided to apply for retirement yesterday morning after a conference with Fire Commissioner Cole. The situation that had been created by the selection of Deputy Chief Grady to succeed Fire Commissioner Cole was more than he could endure, he said.

It had been his intention to retire from active service in the Autumn, but the naming of Grady for a position that would make him his superior impelled the chief to bring his department career to a close at once. He said it would be humiliating for him to serve under Grady and that he would not think of delaying his resignation so that Grady as Fire Commissioner would have the authority to approve his pension application.

Statement of the Chief.

Chief Mullen's statement, announcing his retirement, was as follows:

Having served 40 years in the service of the Boston Fire Department, entering it quite a young man and having given the best years of my life to its service, I now leave it through no wish of my own, but through circumstances over which I have no control.

I have had the honor to serve under all Fire Commissioners since the reorganization of the department in 1878, and in so far as I know I have had the confidence and good wishes of them all, most of them having passed beyond the shadow. My relations with the present commissioner, Charles H. Cole, who is also severing his connections with the

department, during the past two years have been of such high order that it will be a pleasant memory, in coming years, to look back upon them.

It has also been my privilege to have served under the late lamented chiefs, John S. Damrell, William A. Green, Louis F. Webber and William T. Cheswell, all of whom were a credit and an honor to the city they served so well. Men of strong character—brave and honorable—it was an honor to have served with them and gain from them the experience which has assisted me in my duties as the executive head of the department.

Praises the Department.

I leave the department with my best wishes to the officers and members who have so ably and heroically assisted in helping me to sustain the good name of the department of which I had the honor of being at the head for the last eight years.

I have had reason at times to deal harshly with a few, but it was for their own interest, as well as for the good of the service, and it was always with the best intention of bringing them to a realization of the duties required of them.

Boston's Fire Department, with its large number of men and its exacting problems, stands second to none in this or any other country for discipline and action when required. It

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is my earnest prayer that it will always remain so and that, no matter what changes occur from time to time, the same generous support accorded me will always be given.

It is with pleasure that I can say that I have not had a general alarm during my career as the fire-fighting head, owing to the promptness and active cooperation of its members, and, considering the dangers of their calling, the members have been free from loss of life, but two, Capt Patrick Lanegan of Ladder 13 and Joseph A Hackett of the same company, both killed by falling walls, and of whom there were none more gentlemanly or braver.

Bids McDonough Farewell.

The retirement of the chief was not unexpected, but few members of the department knew he had retired until after he had departed from his headquarters on Mason st. In less than an hour after he had told Commissioner Cole that he did not wish to remain longer and had applied for retirement the pictures were stripped from the wall and the contents of his desk were removed and he was on his way to the house of Engine 22 on Warren av to say farewell to Junior Deputy Chief Peter F. McDonough.

As these two gray-haired veterans of the service were parting tears were in their eyes Mullen said, "I am going, Peter. You will be the boss after 9 o'clock. I don't wish to go, but I do not feel that I should stay."

The chief then stepped into his machine and drove to his home at 471 East 4th st, South Boston.

Stirred by Quincy House Alarm.

A few minutes after his retirement took effect the first alarm sounded for the Quincy House fire.

"That is Acting Chief McDonough's first call; he will take that fire, as he is temporarily in command owing to the fact that Senior Deputy Chief Grady is on a day off," he said.

Within a few minutes the second and third alarms were registered on the tapper and he sprang from his chair. He had forgotten for a moment that he was no longer chief, and was prepared to answer the call to duty.

"No; I am not the boss any longer. I don't have to respond any more, do I?" he said, addressing his wife and children. "No, you can stay with us now, John," replied the wife.

"I would like to go down there, but they don't need me. I will soon be forgotten."

It was apparent that it was with difficulty that the chief restrained himself from going in town.

"It seems strange that the city should be visited by an extra-alarm fire at the moment my pension was taking effect," said the chief. His curiosity got the better of him and he finally called up Fire Headquarters to learn where the fire was.

To Fight for Higher Pension.

Ex-Chief Mullen said his pension will be \$2250 a year. He applied for retirement under the Act of 1913, which says that any member of the force 55 years old, who has seen not less than 25 years of service, shall upon his own petition be granted a pension. The law is mandatory.

Though Mayor Curley has announced the reduction of salaries of all the officials of the Fire Department, Ex-Chief Mullen insists that his pension will be \$2250 and not \$2000, as Fire Commissioner Cole has not yet been officially informed of the reductions. Chief Mullen said that he would fight to a finish any plan to prevent him from getting the larger pension. His salary was to be reduced to \$4000 from \$4500.

Commissioner Cole did not wish to comment on the retirement of Chief Mullen, but intimated that he would have something to say later.

Grady Would Not Have Interfered.

Senior Deputy Chief Grady was on a day off. He learned from a reporter of the pensioning of Mullen.

He said he was surprised. He said that should he be qualified as Fire Commissioner and had Chief Mullen remained in office he never would have interfered with him. The deputy said he held no enmity for Mullen. He also

declared that he did not wish to be the chief of the department and that the retiring of Mullen would make no change in his plans.

At 8 o'clock this morning he will report for duty and become acting chief.

Tomorrow Fire Commissioner Cole's resignation takes effect and some other department head, probably Election Commissioner John M Minton, will be made temporary head of the department pending the confirmation of Grady by the Civil Service Commission.

Should Grady be qualified, the duty of naming a chief and two deputy chiefs and making other promotions will be his. That Deputy Chief McDonough will be named as chief of the department is looked upon as a certainty. Examinations will have to be held before the other positions can be filled. Already various district chiefs are preparing to pass a satisfactory test.

Known Throughout Country.

Ex-Chief Mullen had a National reputation. He had represented the city at conventions of the International Association of Fire Engineers held in many large cities. Firemen throughout the country regarded him as an able leader.

He was born in this city June 2, 1851. He was employed as an iron molder and ran to fires as a volunteer when he was in his teens. He officially became connected with the department June 12, 1874, being assigned to Engine 15, Dorchester av.

When given permanent appointment May 8, 1876, he was sent to Engine 22, Northampton st. He was driver of that company several years and performed hose duty beside. The board on Aug 8, 1881, advanced him to captain, skipping a lieutenantcy, and placed him in command of Engine 15.

Four years later he was made chief of the South Boston district and commanded there 16 years, remaining even after his advancement to the grade of second assistant chief in 1897. In 1901 he was named as assistant to Chief Cheswell. While he was assistant chief he handled many large fires.

Met Opposition as Chief.

Mullen became chief Feb 23, 1908. He says his real troubles started then. His appointment was not welcome to some and he was obliged to struggle to retain the place.

Ex-Chief Mullen has lived in South Boston more than 30 years. He has three daughters, a son, John A Jr, formerly Dartmouth basket-ball captain, and a sister-in-law also is one of the family circle.

The ex-chief is a member of several social and fraternal bodies. Though he has many warm friends, all his spare time was spent with his family. His Summer home is at Ouset.

He said that he would miss the daily routine that he has followed so long. "My friends will approve the action I have taken," he said. "It is hard, but it had to be done."

Ex-Chief Mullen has been president of the Massachusetts State Firemen's Association, the Massachusetts Fire Chiefs' Club and other organizations of firemen.

TWO PREVIOUS CASES.

Fire Chief Green and Police Lieut Burley Made Commissioners.

The naming by Mayor Curley of Deputy Chief Grady to be Fire Commissioner has raised the question whether there have been previous instances of men being selected from the department for fire or police commissionerships. It has happened once in each department that a man has been elevated from an officer to be commissioner; but in both instances it was when there was a triple-head commission instead of a single commissioner.

In 1882 Mayor Green appointed Benjamin O Burley, a lieutenant of the Police Department, to be the third commissioner to serve with Dr Thomas L. Jenks and Gen Nathaniel Wales.

In 1884 William A. Green, chief of the Fire Department, succeeded Edward A. White whose term had expired, as commissioner. He was succeeded by Richard H. Tobin.