

JOHN GRADY IS DEAD IN FLORIDA

Retired as Boston Fire Commissioner in 1919

Had Record of 45 Years' Fine Service in Department

Performed Heroic Feats and Saved Many Lives

Word was received in Boston yesterday of the death in Lake Mary, Fla. of Ex-Fire Commissioner John Grady of Boston, who was retired at his own request from that position in 1919, after a record of 45 years of splendid service in the Boston Fire Department. He was retired on half of the pay of a Chief of a Department.



JOHN GRADY,
Ex-Fire Commissioner.

A Boston boy, a native of the West End, Mr Grady showed an early interest in the Fire Department and as a youngster was often allowed to exercise the fire horses by riding them through the streets. Many hand tubs were in use then, but the steam fire engine had just come into use.

Old Ladder 1 on Friend st., where there is now a modernized motor truck in a modern fire house, is where Commissioner Grady began his career as a fireman. At the age of 15, he was running with Ladder 1 as a call man and during the big Boston Fire of 1872 he was present with this organization.

The youngster showed his mettle at that time by carrying kegs of powder through the streets for the firemen, who used it to blow up buildings in the path of the fire and thus prevent the further spread of the flames.

In May, 1871, he was officially appointed as a regular member of the Fire Department and Chief Green assigned him to Ladder 1. He was noted as a hard worker, who gave the best of himself to his work.

Many Times Commended

Many times Mr Grady was warmly commended for his heroic feats and for his bravery in saving human life. At the Thanksgiving Day fire in 1889, Mr Grady won special fame, as he was the last to leave the burning building in which five other firemen met their deaths. In leaving it, he carried out another fireman who had been overcome. In 1896, he risked his life by entering a burning building and carrying out a keg of powder, in order that the lives of others should be secure.

Mr Grady was the first on the scene of the big Roxbury fire in May, 1903, when the entire city was threatened, being responsible on this occasion for more rescues than it is possible to enumerate here. He was in supreme command of the big Albany-st fire in 1910 when Chief Mullen was away from the city.

By 1894 Mr Grady had advanced to the rank of acting district chief. In 1914 he was made fire commissioner, a position which he held for five years. Under his commissionership, the motorization of the department was increased from 5 percent to more than 50 percent, and the 415 horses formerly used in the department were reduced in number to 195. Fire losses were substantially decreased year by year, but in spite of the tremendous improvements made Commissioner Grady succeeded in keeping well within his appropriation each year.

Established Drill School

Two-thirds of the firehouses were either rebuilt or remodeled, until Boston firemen now enjoy the most modern and comfortable quarters of any in the country. Commissioner Grady established the drill school for young firemen and originated the plan of having them study buildings in order to be thoroughly familiar with them in the event of fire. He originated also the idea of having a man always on the door of the firehouses so that other firemen need not be necessarily disturbed. He also originated the efficient rescue squad, protected by smoke and gas masks.

For many years Mr and Mrs Grady made their home at 86 Walnut av., Roxbury, later moving to a new home on Lebanon st., Melrose, where they were living at the time of his retirement from the commissionership. Mrs Grady now conducts a lodging house at 129 West Newton st. There are no children.