

The Early History of The Bamberg Fire Department (1869- 1925)

The story of Bamberg and the ultimate evolution of fire protection in that town goes back to the approach of the mid-1800s. South Carolina's history is chockfull of stories of how the backcountry or inland areas of the state really began to open up to colonial frontiersmen, especially at the turn of the 19th century. The early settlers to this Coastal Plains' section were mainly Germans, Swiss, Scots-Irish, English and French Huguenots. These newcomers had to make friends with the Edisto tribe of Indians who once roamed, hunted and lived in the area.

We, also, know that the village of Bamberg was settled in large measure by Major William Seaborn Bamberg who came to the area in the 1840s. According to local archives, Mr. Bamberg was an influential businessman who used that influence to incorporate that little community when it was no more than a country crossroads.

The original charter to the Town of Bamberg was on December 19, 1855. And, in 1860, the town boasted a population of about 250 residents. The County Court House wasn't built until 1897, and the Bamberg Cotton Mill became the principal employer, next to farming, in 1892.

Sadly, the little Town of Bamberg had much in common with so many other communities, villages, towns, and cities of that day and time which experienced regular and repeated visits from what many have called "The Fire Fiend." The author, Nancy Backes, said "Americans had for many years helplessly watched their little wooden towns burn and be rebuilt and burn again." Bamberg was certainly no different, and out of necessity, these frequent fires brought attention to the need to

better defend its citizens and their properties from the ravages of unwanted fires.

This writer will attempt to amplify the rich history of the Bamberg Fire Department that is available in order to expand on the struggles, leadership, major challenges, and progression of a long history of service. The history provided in the following pages are taken verbatim from various newspaper articles and commentaries with an occasional observation by this researcher. So, let's begin.

The Charleston Daily News reported in their **June 25, 1869** edition of the paper that *"The Stonewalls" (a fire company in Charleston) have sold their Hunneman engine to a fire company in Bamberg, S. C."* This is the first mention of Bamberg ever having any sort of firefighting apparatus or equipment. So, fourteen years after the town was chartered, the citizens of Bamberg had recognized their need to provide fire protection for their citizens.

As a side-note, Hunneman hand-pumps were manufactured in Boston, Massachusetts, and was founded in 1792 by William Cooper Hunneman who apprenticed under the famous Paul Revere. Hunneman made 745 machines between 1792 to 1883 and was the earliest maker of fire apparatus in the United States.

On **October 19, 1869**, The Charleston Daily News wrote the following: *"The Methodist Parsonage at Bamberg was destroyed by fire on Monday night last. It originated in the kitchen occupied by a colored man and his wife, and was the result of carelessness. The burning timbers were falling on them before they discovered the building was on fire, and they barely escaped with their lives. The firemen were promptly on the ground with the 'Stonewall' engine, worked manfully, and owing to the scarcity of water, caused we suppose by the*

unprecedented drought, it gained the mastery. The parsonage was valued at about \$2,000.”

Then on **November 6, 1869**, the Orangeburg News reported on yet another fire to which Bamberg’s fire department responded. *“On Saturday night last at 12 o’clock, a fire was seen breaking out at the window of Wm. H. Green’s carriage factory, which soon spread and consumed Hay & Pelot’s store, (the building owned by J. C. Dowling,) also Connelly’s work-shop. Loss not covered by Insurance, is about \$5,000.*

Mr. Green had arranged to insure his place this week, but had not perfected his insurance. Several buggies and all Mr. Green’s tools were destroyed.

The Fire Company responded promptly to the alarm, but the supply of water soon being exhausted, were unable to check the progress of the flames.”

In the Daily Phoenix, a Columbia paper, dated **April 12, 1870**, is printed action taken by the South Carolina legislature which approved the fire department’s incorporation on March 1, 1870. The Act states in part *“that the members of the corporation known as the Bamberg Fire Engine Company, of the town of Bamberg, by the name and style of the Bamberg Fire Engine Company, of the town of Bamberg.”* So, now we know for sure there was fire protection in the Town of Bamberg prior to 1918.

On **February 28, 1879**, The Orangeburg Democrat stated *“We just learned of the almost total destruction of our sister town, Bamberg, by fire three nights ago. About fifteen buildings were consumed, valued at \$50,000. We did not learn how the fire originated. This is another warning to our people to be on alert.”*

Sumter's newspaper, The Watchman and Southron, wrote about a "**BIG FIRE IN BAMBERG**" in its **February 26, 1896** edition. *"On February 23, The Bamberg Alliance warehouse was discovered on fire about half past 9 o'clock. There were between 900 and 1,000 bales of cotton stored in the warehouse, belonging to the cotton mill, and about 200 bales belonging to farmers who were holding for high prices. The State liquor dispensary had its stock in this building, which is also a total loss, together with the Alliance warehouse stock of groceries, etc.*

The most heroic efforts were made by the citizens and the local volunteer fire department to save the warehouse and adjoining buildings, but to no purpose.

The origin of the fire is a mystery and is supposed to have been caused by rats."

The Anderson newspaper, The Intelligencer, wrote in its **June 1, 1898**, edition that *"A lighted cigarette stump thrown into a pile of litter, gave Bamberg a fire ten days ago which damaged ten establishments to the extent of \$3,175."*

Again, The Intelligencer reported on **May 10, 1899**, that *"There has been another incendiary fire at Bamberg. The loses was T. J. Countz, who has suffered so greatly from incendiary fires. This time it was a large boarding house that was burned."*

The Fort Mill Times reported in its **March 12, 1902** edition that *"Fire in Bamberg Thursday morning destroyed property to the amount of \$13,000. The fire originated in the store of J. B. Black, this and several other businesses being destroyed."*

The local Bamberg Herald conveyed in its **December 4, 1902** printing that *"The grand jury report states we have visited the jail and find same*

in good condition, but in case of fire were to break out under stairway there is no way in which prisoners could be taken out. We recommend that a suitable door be made in front window allowing access to hall in such an emergency and thereby probably being the means of saving life."

In the same paper, a story broke which says *"Monday morning about two o'clock the house of Mr. Joe Davis on Edisto Street was destroyed by fire. It is said the fire originated from kindling wood placed near the fireplace."*

Once more, The Anderson Intelligencer on **January 21, 1903**, reported *"A fire in Bamberg on Thursday morning destroyed three stores."*

The Bamberg Herald informed its readers in the **February 16, 1904** paper that *"Fire in Bamberg on Thursday morning destroyed several store buildings and business houses, entailing a loss of about \$17,000."*

The Watchman and Southron paper told in its **October 18, 1905** paper *"Tonight Bamberg suffered one of the most disastrous fires in its history. Shortly before nine o'clock the alarm was sounded, and it was discovered that the freight depot was on fire."*

That same fire is reported in the **October 19, 1905** edition of The Bamberg Herald. It is related that a *"Fire at Bamberg recently destroyed the depot of the Southern Railway with freight sheds and platform, merchandise, cotton and freight cars, also damaging stores nearby."*

The Bamberg Herald in the **October 19, 1905**, shares a passionate comment that is worth noting. *"Just think of the property destroyed by fire in Bamberg during the last few years, most of which would have*

been saved if the town had waterworks. How much longer will our people pursue such a 'Penny wise and pound foolish' policy?"

The Herald and News, a Newberry newspaper, reported in its **May 1, 1906**, printing that *"Fire which broke out in Bamberg Cotton Mills early this morning (April 26th) has destroyed a portion of the plant, several other buildings and is now burning. Heavy gale of wind blowing and no way to fight the flames."*

On **November 1, 1906**, The Bamberg Herald published a notice of fire. *"A little after dark Monday night fire was discovered at the residence of Mr. L. C. Price. It was on the roof and was put out before much damage was done. It must have caught from a spark falling on the shingles. A place about four feet square was burned in the roof."*

The local paper, The Bamberg Herald, provided an article on **May 2, 1907** dealing with a proposed bond issue that would bring waterworks to the town. *"Next Tuesday the citizens of this town will vote on the question of issuing bonds in the sum of \$7,000 for waterworks. We have not inquired as to the sentiment, but we presume the bonds will be voted, for it seems to us a plain and simple business proposition. A large sum of money will be saved each year in insurance premiums, to say nothing of the fire protection afforded. It is a matter of economy, and we feel sure our people will vote for the bond issue."*

On **July 25, 1907**, The Bamberg Herald noted two fires during the week. *"The colored Baptist parsonage, occupied by Rev. J. H. Walker, was burned last Saturday night about ten o'clock. He and his family were away from home, and the house was in charge of a near neighbor. The supposition is that it was caused by rats and matches, as there had been no fire in the house for a day or so. Some of the furniture was saved. The fire originated in the kitchen part of the house, and nothing was saved except from the front rooms."*

Then the next fire occurred the next day. *“Sunday about noon the alarm of fire was again sounded, and this time it was the home of Misses Carrie and Laura Bamberg. The fire started in a pantry near the house, and while there was no water to put out the flames, there was ample time to save the furniture in the front rooms. Nothing in the dining room and kitchen was saved.*

Although the crowd which quickly gathered worked hard in carrying out the household goods, they were a great deal more careful than people usually are at fires, and the articles brought out were in good condition, not broken up as is too often the case. Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Hooton board there, and one of the best jobs we ever saw at a fire was the carrying out of Mrs. Hooton’s piano. It is not known how the fire originated. There had been no fire in the pantry, so it must have been a case of rats and matches again.”

This writer must pause to make a comment about the number of fires supposed to be attributed to “rats and matches”. Anything is possible, but today we know better, I hope.

Although not in the Town of Bamberg, notice of a fire having impact in the area was reported on in The Bamberg Herald on **February 13, 1908**. *“The Clear Pond school house was burned last Wednesday morning about nine o’clock. The fire originated in the roof. Most of the furniture was saved. The building was only partially insured.”*

Having no capabilities to fight fires in the country, The Bamberg Herald described another sad fire in outside of the town limits on **October 1, 1908**. *“Mr. John H. Kearse, a hard-working farmer of the Kearse section, was burned out last Thursday morning about two o’clock. He lost his dwelling and its entire contents, and his insurance will not near cover the loss. Mr. Kearse does not know how the fire originated, but is*

supposed rats caused it. He had been up several times during the night with his sick children, and when he was awakened by the fire, the family barely had time to get out before the roof fell in. He had insurance of \$1,000 on the building and \$200 on furniture, and his loss is at least \$2,000 or more.

Kind friends and neighbors soon gathered and assisted in saving the outbuildings, and he desires to heartily thank his friends for their many kindnesses. This misfortune is a hard blow to Mr. Kearse, and his friends deeply regret his loss."

An upstate newspaper, The Lancaster News, gave a brief account of a fire in their **November 21, 1908** printing. *"Fire today destroyed the gin house and crushing mill of the Bamberg Cotton Oil Mill, causing a loss of approximately \$76,000, partially covered by insurance."*

The Times and Democrat picked up on the story in their **November 24, 1908** paper. *"Another disastrous fire has visited Bamberg and this afternoon the splendid plant of the Cotton Oil Company, at this place, is in ashes....The distress signal was sounded by the whistle and the fire bells sounded the alarm, but before assistance could be rendered the whole ginnery was in flames, and the heat was so intense that no one could approach near enough to the building to combat the fire or even to remove several bales of cotton belonging to patrons of the ginnery which lay in front of the buildings."*

The article went on to say, *"Bamberg telephoned over here (Orangeburg) Thursday night for the loan of one thousand feet of hose with which to fight the fire then raging over there. After consulting with Mayor Dukes, Mr. T. O. S. Dibble, Chief of the local fire department, went over in an automobile with 650 feet of hose, they deeming it unwise to let more than that amount of hose be taken from the city. Orangeburg was glad to be in a position to aid her sister town, but we*

would advise our friends over there to keep their fire hose a little more handy.”

Much interest was raised when The Bamberg Herald wrote in the **December 23, 1909** edition about organizing a fire department. Apparently, a prior meeting was held to discuss the matter, appointed temporary officers, and decided further details needed to be worked out. Interestingly, there is no mention about a fire department having been organized forty years earlier (1869) along with the purchase of fire apparatus from Charleston. The article is lengthy, but fascinating.

“The second meeting in the matter of organizing a fire department for Bamberg was held in the city hall last Friday evening, with Senator J. B. Black presiding and Mr. M. W. Brabham secretary. Mr. J. A. Hunter, of the by-laws and organization committee, had written to Mr. Dibble, chief of the Orangeburg department, and had requested him to attend the meeting if possible. Mr. Dibble was present, having spent the day in the city. During the day he conferred with Chief W. D. Rhoad and gave him much valuable information in regard to organizing and conducting the department here.

Mr. Dibble made an address at the meeting and explained the working of a fire department in a most satisfactory manner, he being asked a number of questions by those present. He had also drawn up a set of by-laws which were adopted. Mr. Dibble was thanked by a rising vote for his kindness in coming over and assisting in the organization and the valuable services rendered.

The temporary organization was made permanent, the department is now organized with Mr. W. D. Rhoad as chief; Mr. G. Moyer Dickinson, assistant chief; Mr. C. R. Brabham, Jr., and Capt. W. R. Wright captain of the two hose companies.

A motion that the hook and ladder company be composed of colored men was adopted unanimously, it being the opinion of all present that the colored people should be given a chance to show their patriotism and interest in the welfare of the town. Chief Rhoad was instructed to organize the hook and ladder company with colored citizens.

The meeting then adjourned, after a most satisfactory session of about two hours. All our people are enthusiastic about the fire department, and Chief Rhoad and his assistants have taken hold of the matter in earnest, and we feel sure Bamberg's fire department will be a good one. The two hose companies will meet soon and get in shape for fighting fire, when the apparatus now on hand will be turned over to them. These meetings will likely be held this week, as it is the purpose of Chief Rhoad and the captains of the hose companies to get ready for business at once."

Apparently the Bamberg Fire Department did get up and running as planned as evidenced by the article posted in The Bamberg Herald on **May 26, 1910**. *"We have received an invitation to attend and participate in the entertainments attending the sixth annual convention and tournament of the S. C. State Firemen's Association, to be held at Sumter, June 21st, 22nd, and 23rd. This will be a great occasion for the firemen of the State, and Bamberg's Fire Department should be represented there."*

Once again, the Fort Mill Times picked up a story about a Bamberg fire in their **July 11, 1912** edition of the paper. *"Fire broke out in a wooden building just in the rear of H. J. Brabham's store, in the business section of the town. The flames gained headway with such speed, the building was soon ablaze, and a fine horse belonging to L. P. McMillian was burned to death before the door to his stable could be reached. Two mules were injured, but were rescued."*

The State Firemen's Association was organized in 1905, and its leadership immediately went to work on legislation to provide monies to approved fire departments obtained from 1% of insurance sold in their districts. The Bamberg Herald reported in the **April 30, 1914** printing that *"The Bamberg Fire Department will receive from the one per cent insurance tax, \$113.84, this being the amount the town is entitled to under the conditions of the act of the legislature imposing this tax on foreign insurance companies doing business in this State."*

Then one year later, The Bamberg Herald, in the **April 15, 1915** edition made reference that *"The Bamberg Fire Department will receive from the one mill insurance tax the sum of \$126.90. This is the tax for 1914, which is now being distributed."* WOW!...an increase of \$13.06!!

The Anderson Intelligencer writes on **May 13, 1915** that *"The new hose and reel house for the Bamberg Fire Department has been completed and is now in commission. This is quite an addition to the firefighting equipment of Bamberg and one that was very much needed."*

Both The Bamberg Herald and The Greenwood Daily Journal tells in their **May 20, 1915** paper that *"Mr. W. D. Rhoad, chief of the Bamberg Fire Department, has gone to Greenwood to attend the annual firemen's convention in session there this week."*

The Bamberg Herald on **May 11, 1916** reported *"The Bamberg Fire Department receives this year the sum of \$127.36 from the one per cent insurance tax. The total amount collected under this tax in the State this year is \$13,452.57."*...an increase of 40 cents over last year!

Improvements to the City's Fire Department were noted on **February 8, 1917** in The Bamberg Herald. *"An interesting meeting of the Bamberg City Council was held Tuesday night, at which plans were launched for improvements to the city fire department. It was decided to purchase*

500 feet of fire hose, to be added to the present equipment. Mr. W. D. Rhoad, chief of the fire department, asked for this amount of new hose, which now gives a sufficient amount to meet the needs of the city.

Plans were discussed, looking to the purchase of a Ford truck for fire hose. While no definite action was taken along this line, the matter is now being investigated, and it is probable that the truck may be purchased, instead of two hand reels, the cost being approximately the same for one truck as for two reels.

A site is being sought for locating a hose house somewhere in the lower section of the city, so as to render effectual fire protection to that section of town. The matter of providing a fire alarm was also discussed, and is now being investigated. It is generally conceded that the present plan of discharging pistols and shot guns is practically no alarm at all, and the time seems to have arrived when the city demands something that resembles an alarm. It is probable that a siren whistle may be placed at the power house, to be sounded when there is a fire.”

Good news for the town! The Bamberg Herald announced on **November 29, 1917** that a motor fire truck had arrived. *“At last the motor truck to be used in fighting fires has arrived in Bamberg and presents a very attractive appearance as it runs through the streets. The order for this truck had been placed many months ago, so long in fact, that many people had forgotten about it, and it has been badly needed time and again since the order was sent out. It finally got here Friday, however, after being driven through the country from Charlotte. The machine is a splendid addition to the scant fire fighting apparatus which the town had before, and will enable the fire fighters to get the hose and reel to the scene of fires in short order now. The truck is painted in bright red, the color which practically all city fire departments have adopted, and bears the large letters, ‘B. F. D.,’ meaning Bamberg*

Fire Department. This is the step in the proper direction and may mean a great thing for Bamberg some day."

Just a few months later, a confusing article appears in The Wilmington Dispatch on **February 5, 1918** in which more reorganization of the fire department is discussed after everyone thought things were finally organized as it should be. But, the article says, *"At a meeting of representative citizens held here Thursday evening a complete organization of the Bamberg fire department was perfected and definite plans worked out for systematic fire fighting. W. D. Rhoad was elected chief of the department, with H. L. Hinnant and D. W. Phillips as captains; A. B. Utsey, secretary, and J. B. Brickle and Eddie Jackson drivers. M. G. Cooner and A. L. Edwins were designated to make special studies of the chemical apparatus. The fire department includes 12 men, each of whom has pledged himself to do his utmost when needed."*

Also, The Bamberg Herald reported basically the same article as written above on **February 7, 1918**.

Success at last! The Bamberg Herald on **February 28, 1918** gives some praise to the Bamberg firemen. *"Bamberg's Fire Department did the best piece of work that has been seen in a long time. The organization proved it actual worth on this occasion, and under the leadership of Mr. W. D. Rhoad, waged a successful fight against a fire that threatened to menace much property. The fire team was given much assistance by a number of others who did volunteer service."*

Bamberg's Fire Department seems to have the support of city council as evidenced in the **March 7, 1918** printing of The Bamberg Herald concerning a new fire alarm system. *"Bamberg's fire department has lately been busy working out a system of fire alarm signals and dividing the city into wards. A fire whistle has lately been secured and installed*

at the power house. The fire department requests that when a fire occurs the telephone central office be called and notified. It is unnecessary to give any alarm except calling central and stating as near as possible the location of the fire, that is whose house it is, and on what street located. Central will turn in the correct alarm.

The town has been divided into five wards for the purposes of the fire department. Under the system gotten up by the department, the alarms should prevent confusion not only on the part of members of the fire fighting force, but of the public as well."

The article continues with an explanation how the system is to work with examples of the number blasts for each ward. Then it says *"It might be stated that this system is rather in the nature of an experiment and it may be found after use to be necessary to make changes, but all of this is being worked out by the department and will be perfected as soon as possible. The fire department is working hard to be of real service to the city and the cooperation of the citizens is asked. The equipment at present is limited, but the best will be made of what they have. The team meets every Tuesday afternoon at 6:30 for practice."*

Two months later, the Bamberg Fire Department was put to the test. According to the **May 16, 1918** edition of The Bamberg Herald, a fire broke out at the Cotton Oil Company. *"One of the most disastrous fires that have occurred in Bamberg in many years destroyed the hull house of The Cotton Oil Company Saturday afternoon....The fire was discovered about 3 o'clock. When first noticed, the smoke was pouring from the building...The Cotton Oil Company has one of the most perfect fire fighting systems in any plant in this section of the country, but the sudden wind appearing just upon the outburst of the flames made it impossible for the mill force to handle the situation, and help was called for from the city fire department, which responded with fine results.*

The fire department did a neat piece of work in saving the entire oil mill from destruction. The main building and seed house caught fire several times, but the blaze was extinguished. The men of the team placed themselves in danger in handling the fire, but they stood by the nozzles and saved thousands of dollars worth of valuable property."

Happy days are here again! The Bamberg Herald reported in their **November 14, 1918** paper that *"When the news of the signing of the armistice between Germany and the allied governments was received in Bamberg Monday morning, it was received with much joy. Everybody was happy, and for a while even the 'flu' (Keep in mind that the Spanish Flu pandemic was occurring during this time) failed to dampen the spirits of the populace. The news was first received through telephone messages to various parties in town, who promulgated the glad tidings to others, and so it spread, although everybody was a little disappointed when they failed to find the news in the dailies reaching the city in the early morning paper, which goes to press some hours later than the South Carolina dailies, reached Bamberg by nine o'clock, and the great news was spread all over the front page. This dispelled all remaining doubts, and the people let their joy be unconfined. The fire truck was brought out and the fire department 'took in' the town with much noise. The clanging of the bells and tooting of the whistles was interspersed by frequent discharges of fire works and pocket artillery, but nobody seemed to mind; war had ended and people had to celebrate."*

Sadness at Christmas Time caused by a destructive fire is announced in The Bamberg Herald's **December 19, 1918** edition of the paper. *"Last Saturday afternoon about 1 o'clock the residence occupied by Mr. A. M. Sandifer and family caught on fire and was completely destroyed. The house was the property of the Bamberg Cotton Mills Company, and was a very neat cottage....The adjoining house, also one of the mill cottages, caught on fire several times, but the fire department succeeded in saving it, although the building was considerably damaged....The fire*

department did excellent work in confining the blaze, as a heavy gale was blowing at the time, and at one time the fire had the appearance of being a dangerous conflagration.”

On **November 27, 1919**, The Bamberg Herald printed that *“The Bamberg Fire Department was hastily summoned Friday to Denmark to assist in subduing the flames there, but by the time the fire truck arrived on the scene, the flames had about died down. Several houses were completely razed to the ground by the flames, which quickly devoured the frame buildings.”*

The Bamberg Herald reported on a bad fire at the Carlisle School on Saturday night as noted in the **October 13, 1921** edition of the paper. *“A spectacular fire, and a most disastrous one, occurred late Saturday night, when the Mary Ann Bamberg hall at Carlisle school, was almost completely destroyed by flames. The fire occurred after the cadets rooming in the dormitory had retired, and reached such an advanced stage before discovery that some of the young men did not have time to save all of their personal effects from the fire....By the time the fire whistle was sounded the entire top of the hall was aflame, and it appeared that nothing could stay the flames.*

The fire department responded quickly, and although the flames were formidable, the department succeeded in checking the fire before the building was a complete wreck. The entire lower story is intact, but was damaged by water and smoke.”

Well, a second conflagration occurred at Carlisle School during this present session of classes just three months after another bad fire damaged a dormitory. The new fire was reported on **January 19, 1922** in The Bamberg Herald. *“Carlisle School suffered another disastrous conflagration last Thursday night when the H. J. Brabham hall, the large dormitory on the southern end of the campus, was completely razed to*

the ground. This was a tremendous building, one of the largest in town, the first portion of it having been erected some 30 years ago and a considerable addition having been made to it on the east end in more recent years.

The alarm of fire was sounded shortly after nine o'clock and few people had retired for the night. Ordinarily it would have been possible to save at least a part of the building as the fire appeared to burn slowly for probably 30 minutes after citizens arrived on the scene. However, a number of the volunteer fire fighters were in Orangeburg for a theatrical performance; in addition to this it was with difficulty that the automobile fire truck was ever started and only after considerable delay, and on top of it all there was very little or no pressure on the water after it was turned on the blaze. Probably no such unfortunate combination has arisen for many years to aid a Bamberg fire in its work of complete destruction."

This writer discovered some interesting information about the fire department when researching the Sanborn Maps...a former publisher of detailed maps created to help insurance companies assess liability in communities. They contain enormous amounts of information, especially on fire protection. In **May of 1922**, that mapping company noted that Bamberg's fire department may have fallen on some hard times because it had only seven volunteer firemen and one officer. In addition, a notation revealed that the town had a truck (referred to as a Jeffrey auto truck) which *"carried a reel having 600 ft. of 2 1/2 inch hose"* as well as *"a partly dismantled triple combination truck with the chemical tanks having been removed. 400 ft. of 2 1/2" hose held in reserve at the fire headquarters."*

However, good news noted on **December 17, 1924**, when The Aiken Standard announced that *"Bamberg's new fire protection unit arrived by freight Tuesday morning. The unit was shipped here in care of the*

company's representative, Mr. Shultz, who has been in the city for several days, and he is to receive the motor equipment and turn it over to the city. The unit is one of the most modern to be secured, it has a large pumping capacity, sufficient to handle any fire that Bamberg is likely to experience, and with this equipment this city is expected to be placed among the foremost cities of the state in point of fire protection."

Orangeburg's Times and Democrat reported on **October 27, 1925** that Bamberg's firemen had to go to the aid of a neighboring town in distress. *"The Bamberg Fire Department received a rush call for help from Denmark Thursday and the local fire fighters were proud to make a quick dash to the assistance of their stricken sister city. Upon arrival it was discovered that the large Zickgraf Lumber plant was in flames, and for a while the firemen had their hands full. The wind was blowing at a high velocity, and the property was very dry and an easy prey for the dangerous blaze....The Bamberg firemen with their expensive apparatus...led the situation in a manner high creditable to veterans, and by courageous work and skill, in cooperation with the Denmark's citizens, had the flames checked in a reasonable short while and thus prevented an impending serious conflagration.*

The Bamberg company was delighted to have been of some help to its neighbor in time of distress, in turn the Denmark people were loud in expressions of appreciation and praise of the aid dispatched to them. Thanks generally were extended and Mr. Zickgraf himself evidenced his gratitude by two substantial checks, one presented to the City of Bamberg the other to the company which fought so gallantly in helping to extinguish the flames."

This writer chooses to suspend further research of the Bamberg Fire Department at this point because more current history is already chronicled from 1925 forward. It has been an interesting project to

uncover some of this fire department's stories and legacy which had been lost through time or forgotten by generations long past. Hopefully this work will be shared with many whose interest and love of the fire service will kindle a desire to keep our legacy alive.