

Hall of Legends, Legacies, and Leaders

Inductee #5

Chief Engineer Charles E. Miles

First Volunteer Chief 1876-1880

Los Angeles, California



Miles served as the first Chief Engineer of the Los Angeles Volunteer Fire Department 1873 to 1875, and June 20, 1876 to March 1880. A civil engineer by profession, he had ties with the Los Angeles Water Company in its early days. Starting out as a member, afterwards captain of the "Thirty-Eights," Miles became chief of the Los Angeles fire department. He was the first and only paid employee of the volunteer company and a major influence in the development of the Department. His accomplishments, which are appreciated by members to this day, include the passage of an 1898 bond issue providing \$150,000 for the purchase of sites; the construction of 12 municipally-owned fire stations; plans for a Firemen's pension system; and greater efficiency with the fire alarm system.