



Alfred Paull – *Business, Industry and Professions*

Alfred Paull, son of West Virginia Supreme Court Judge James Paull and Jane Ann (Fry) Paull, was born in Wheeling on October 14, 1854. After attending Wheeling schools and Washington and Jefferson College, Washington, PA, he became actively associated with business interests in Wheeling.

He started his active career as secretary of the Nail City Glass company and, beginning in 1881, served as secretary of the Manufacturers Insurance Company, a West Virginia corporation with its general offices in Wheeling. In January 1885, Paull became secretary of the Underwriters Insurance Company. He wielded much influence in the building of the business of each of these corporations and gained an authoritative position with the insurance business in the state. His Alfred Paull & Son general insurance agency became state agents for West Virginia of several leading fire insurance companies and eventually included some 135 sub-agencies throughout the state. He also served as vice president of the Bank of the Ohio Valley and was associated with other well-known enterprises, being a director in the Nail City Lantern company, the American Insurance company, and the Dollar Savings bank. He was described as “one of the vital and progressive men who have done much to further the civic and material advancement of Wheeling.”

Deeply interested in all things pertaining to the welfare and progress of his native city, Paull gave long and effective service as secretary of the Ohio Valley General Hospital, from which office he retired January 1, 1931. He also served four years as a member of Wheeling City Council and eight years as a member of the Board of Education and was a director of the YMCA. He also was prominent in the Masonic fraternity, in which his affiliations included Bates Lodge No. 33, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons; Union Chapter No. 1, Royal Arch Masons; Cyrene Commandery No. 7, Knights Templars; and Osiris Temple, Ancient Arabic Order Nobles of the Mystic Shrine. In addition, he was a grand commander of the West Virginia Grand Commandery of Knights Templars and a potentate of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine.

An active member and ruling elder of Vance Memorial Presbyterian Church, Paull organized the famous Men’s Bible Class, growing the group’s membership from an initial eight men around the turn of the century to 250 by the time of his death some 20 years later. He was an active teacher of the class, which, beginning in 1914, had an amazing average attendance of 115.

Alfred Paull married Lee Singleton, a daughter of Captain W.T. Singleton, in 1877. Four children blessed this union: Alfred Singleton Paull (1883-1931), who married Mary Virginia Sands and was a partner in the Alfred Paull & Son insurance business; Mary Irwin Paull (1878-1962), who married Arthur G. Hubbard; Lyde Elizabeth Paull (1880-1967), who married Lyman B. Kirkpatrick; and Lee Cunningham Paull (1889-1958), who married Mary Glessner.

After being prominently involved in Wheeling’s business community for nearly half a century, primarily centered in the fire insurance field, Paull died on February 28, 1923. His obituary stated that “his greatest value to the community lay in the unselfish public spirit which characterized his entire life. He was charitable, courteous and kindly, gave of his time and substance to welfare movements throughout his life and found time for a prodigious amount of church work during an active and busy career.” He was survived by his wife, their four children, and nine grandchildren. Descendants of his son Lee Cunningham Paull are still active in the insurance and real estate business in Wheeling.