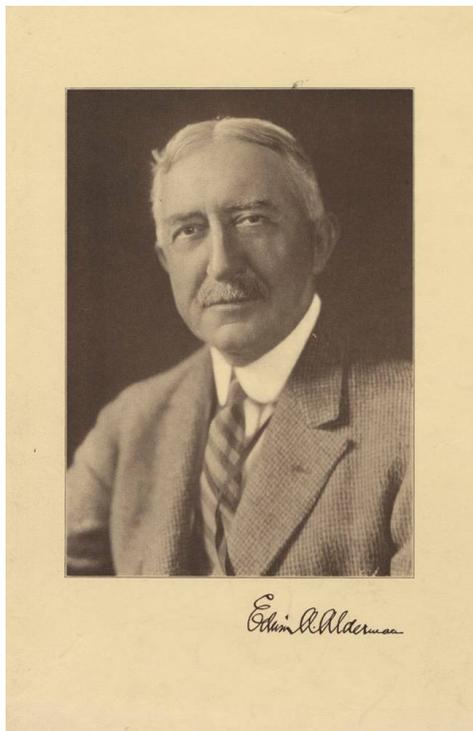


**Marching Through History
with the Charlottesville Municipal Band**

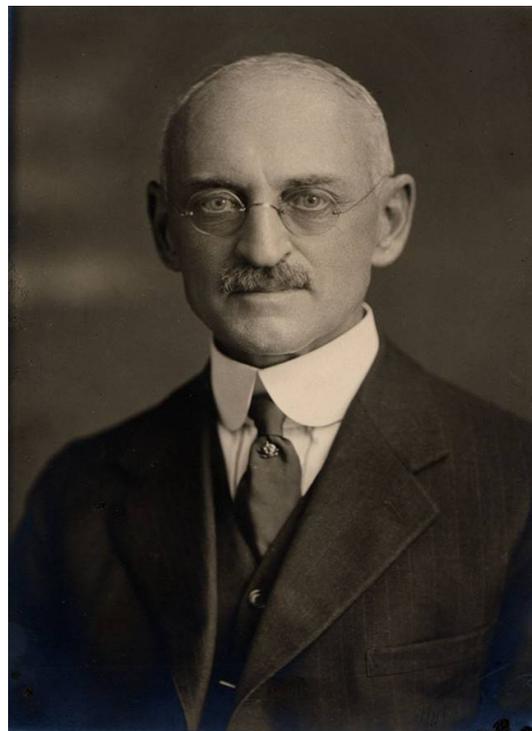
April 22, 2018

In the Beginning.... The Founding of the Band

The year was 1922, the month of February to be exact. It had been a cold, sometimes snowy, winter in Charlottesville. For the administration and students at UVA the winter had seemed even more chill and gloomy because of events taking place at the State Capitol down in Richmond. For over 30 years state law makers had been trying to pass legislation that would move the UVA Medical School out of Charlottesville and combine it with the Medical College of Virginia facilities in Richmond. Why did the State want to do this? It was partly a matter of economic efficiency and partly a feeling that a big city environment offered advantages in medical education that a small town couldn't. Also, the Medical College of Virginia at that time was all but bankrupt and a merger with UVA's School and a relocating to Richmond was seen as beneficial to both. It looked like 1922 would be the year they would finally succeed.



Edwin A. Alderman



Dr. Theodore Hough

Needless to say, UVA faculty and students strongly opposed the move, and when it appeared that it might actually take place, University President Edwin Alderman and Medical School Dean Dr. Theodore Hough were determined to block it. The two men assembled a crackerjack team of lobbyists led by local lawyer Garland McNutt, jumped on a C&O train headed for Richmond, and spent nearly three weeks during early February 1922 bending the ears of every state legislator they could find, making their case that moving the UVA Medical School to Richmond would mean the ruin of the University as a potent force for exceptional education in the Commonwealth and the South. They needed to convince 21 state senators of the righteousness of their cause, and by Wednesday, February 22nd – an unusually warm day with temperatures in the mid-seventies – they had succeeded in securing the necessary votes to block passage of the bill. The threat was over, and the idea of moving the Medical School would not seriously recur.

So what has all this got to do with music and the Municipal Band? Well, back in Charlottesville, when news of the bill's defeat reached town, UVA students and townspeople alike were jubilant. A grassroots movement quickly sprang up to have as many students and townspeople as possible meet President Alderman and Dr. Hough at the train station when they arrived home on Thursday the 23rd at 4:30 in the afternoon. UVA classes were cancelled, and almost every business in town closed for a half hour at 4:15 PM so as many people as possible could join in the celebrations. By the time the westbound C&O train pulled into the station, a huge crowd of UVA students and townspeople was on hand to welcome the victorious lobbyists home.

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MEET THE TRAIN

Throughout the day there has been a movement to arouse the people of the city to the reception that will be given Dr. E. A. Alderman, president of the University of Virginia, and Dr. Theodore Hough, dean of the Medical School, when they return from Richmond today.

The students and hundreds of citizens will meet the train at the lower station at 4.30, and there will be a big demonstration.

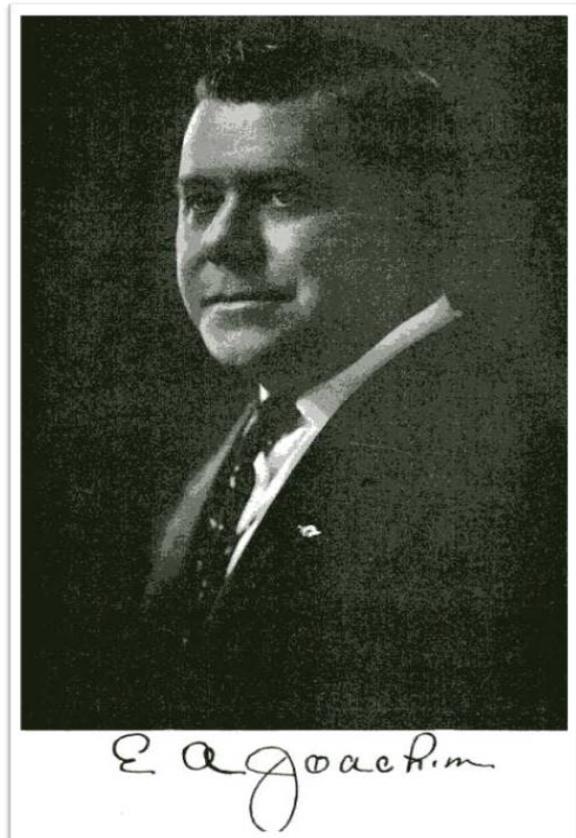
Practically every business house in the city closes at 4.15 in order for everybody to participate in the demonstration.

Unfortunately, no photograph of Alderman and Hough's actual arrival at the C & O Station seems to exist. According to the news reports, "The entire medical class, several hundred students from other departments, and many townspeople were at Main Street station when the Richmond train pulled in. Dean Hough was carried on the shoulders of medical students to a waiting trolley and, after President Alderman and Mayor Wheeler had been assisted to seats in the vehicle, the coach was drawn by medical students along Main Street to the University."

Among the throng watching events at the C & O train station were two local businessmen and friends, Sol Kaufman and Edward A. Joachim, who were standing on the old Belmont Bridge in order to have a better view of the festivities. Kaufman was a life-long resident of Charlottesville, having been born here on February 15, 1874. His father was Moses Kaufman, a prominent Jewish businessman and clothier. Sol would eventually take over his father's clothing business and manage it for over fifty years. At the time of the founding of the Band, Sol was 48 years old.



Sol Kaufman



Edward A. Joachim

Edward A. Joachim was born in Ohio on March 3, 1872. He came to Charlottesville as a young man by way of West Virginia, arriving here in 1898 to establish himself in the steam laundry business. Later he became a director of the Farmers and Merchants National Bank, an active member of the Rotary Club and in 1921 was elected President of the Chamber of Commerce. He was also a distinguished member of the local Masonic Lodge. At the time of the founding of the Band he was not quite 50 years old.

MUNICIPAL BAND TO BE ORGANIZED

Committees representing Rotary, Kiwanis and the Young Men's Business Club met at the Chamber of Commerce Thursday afternoon, August 17, perfected a permanent organization to give Charlottesville a first class band, and elected the following officers:

F. E. Merrifield, president.
Dr. G. W. Parrott, vice president.
L. D. Case, secretary-treasurer.

The new body will form a band at once. It will employ the band master, select the members of the band, and transact all business matters of the musical organization. The executive committee is composed of the President, Vice-President and the Secretary-Treasurer.

It was decided that \$3,000 will be required for instruments, salary of band master, etc., and the following committee was appointed to raise that sum: Hollis Rinehart, N. T. Shumate, W. W. Waddell.

The meeting unanimously voted to employ Mr. Harry Lowe to direct the band at a salary of \$50 per month, contract to begin Sept. 1, 1922. The director is the only member of the band who will receive any compensation. Mr. Henry Rubin was elected assistant director.

The first rehearsal of the band will be held in the C. & A. Railway building Monday night, August 21, at 8 o'clock. Thereafter, the band

As Kaufman and Joachim watched the welcoming festivities, from out of nowhere, it seemed, someone among the celebrants got the idea of enlivening the event still further by hoisting an upright piano onto the back of an old flatbed wagon pulled by a mule, and along with several others playing saxophone, banjo, violin and drums, this impromptu group of musicians pulled into the crowd and added what music they could to the cheers and singing. (At the time, the University of Virginia lacked a wind band.) Looking down at the little group of musicians, Kaufman lamented to his friend that Charlottesville ought to have a *real* town band to lead parades and provide music for patriotic events and other celebrations such as the one they were witnessing. Joachim agreed and during the months that followed, they talked up the idea of forming a town band to anyone who would listen. By the following August it looked like they had sufficient interest and support to go ahead, and on the evening of August 17, 1922 members of the Kiwanis Club, the Rotary Club, and the Young Men's Business Club met and "...perfected a permanent organization to give Charlottesville a first class band." From that meeting came the Municipal Band of Charlottesville, and down through the decades since, the band you see and hear today.

But in all probability, had the State

legislature not tried to move the UVA Medical School out of Charlottesville, or if UVA President Alderman and his team had been unsuccessful in preventing that move, or had Sol Kaufman and Ed Joachim not had both the vision to see the need for a town band and the perseverance to organize it, the citizens of Charlottesville and surrounding communities would not be here today playing the music that has been “The Soundtrack of the Community” for nearly 100 years.

Note: If anyone reading this has a photograph of the actual event at the train station, especially one showing the make-shift “band” on its wagon, please get in touch with the Municipal Band so that we can make a copy. Thanks!