

# **The Buhler Family**

**Ancestors and Descendants of  
Peter Anton Buhler of New Orleans, Louisiana.**

**BY GEORGE L. BUHLER JR.**

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## Charles Anton Buhler

**Charles Anton Buhler** was born 25 April 1854, in New Orleans, Louisiana.<sup>1</sup> Charles was the third born child of Peter Anton Buhler of Wurrtemberg and Gertrude Schmidt of Bavaria. His birthplace was their home on Ursulines Street, between Miro and Tonti, in the 2nd district of New Orleans. He married Martha Chestnut on 14 July 1877. Charles died 1 September 1924 in New Orleans.

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As an infant, Charles survived the worst yellow fever epidemic to ever ravage the citizens of New Orleans. There were 12,944 yellow fever deaths between 1853 and 1855. Charles' eldest brother, Peter Anton, born in 1852, has not been found in any documents other than his recorded birth. Recently arrived immigrants and children were particularly susceptible to yellow fever and it is possible Peter fell victim during this outbreak.

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<b>Year</b>	1850	1851	1852	1853	1854	1855	1856	1857	1858	1859
<b>Deaths</b>	107	17	456	7849	2425	2670	74	200	4845	91

Yellow Fever Deaths in New Orleans, 1817-1905, Louisiana Division,  
New Orleans Public Library.  
<<http://nutrias.org/~nopl/facts/feverdeaths.htm>>

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On 26 January 1861 delegates elected to the the Louisiana secession convention voted to withdraw from the Union by a vote of 113 to 17. "When news of secession reached New Orleans, bells rang, guns boomed at the foot of Canal Street, people took to the streets shouting and waving, and from the windows of private homes and the tops of public buildings the Pelican flag fluttered proudly." <sup>6</sup> The enthusiasm soon quieted. A Union flotilla had ran the defenses at Forts Jackson and St. Phillip downriver of New Orleans. The citizens of the town began burning goods on the levee docks, particularly cotton, to avoid it falling into the hands of the north. Vessels were set afire and sent downstream to hinder the approaching Union fleet. Wharves were destroyed as well as drydocks. On 25 April 1862, Charles' eighth birthday, the Union squadron commanded by Flag Officer David G. Farragut anchored in front of the city. Two officers were sent ashore and asked where they could find the mayor to demand the city's surrender. Interestingly, it was a German who offered to escort them to the council. Without hardly a fight, New Orleans' leaders soon complied. The Federal occupation troops of General Benjamin Franklin Butler entered the city on 1 May 1862.

About 1867, after the war had ended and during the Union occupation of New Orleans, Charles moved with his family to Algiers on the right bank of the Mississippi River. Charles was 13 and probably had begun his apprenticeship at his father's boots and shoes shop in their home on Villere at the corner of Seguin. The 1870 census counts Charles at 16 years of age as a shoemaker. After his father's early death, about 1875, the shoe business was operated by Charles' half-uncle, Peter Kilian Buhler. Charles' involvement with the family boots and shoes business during this time is uncertain.

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Charles had discovered another career interest before his father died that may have kept him from stepping into the shoe business. He joined the Algiers volunteer fire department at 19. His first appointment on 4 July 1873 was with the Washington Hook and Ladder Company Number 1 whose motto was "*We Raise to Save*". On 14 July 1876 Charles was assigned to the Brooklyn Number 2 ("*to the Rescue*") and chosen as second assistant foreman a year later. During his 18 years with the volunteer department Charles served as a sub-delegate and member of the relief committee of the Fireman's Charitable Association of Algiers. Charles also worked as a laborer, shoemaker, clerk, and drayman to support his family during these years. (Table 2.)

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**ENGINE COMPANY NO. 17. in 1895.** Captain Charles Anton Buhler, far left and inset photograph.

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The volunteer fire companies of Algiers ceased to operate at the end of 1891. On 1 January 1892 Algiers joined the ranks of the paid fire department of New Orleans. Effective that date, Charles Buhler was appointed driver of Engine No. 16 on the corner of

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Verret Street and Pelican Avenue. He was promoted to Captain on 14 September 1894 and transferred to Engine No.17 on Delaronde near Bouny Street. This site previously served as the Algiers courthouse until 1869. Here Captain Charles discharged his duties with a single Jeffries engine and the following members of the company: Lieutenant William Hoffmann, Engineer Charles Adams, Pipeman John Power, Stoker John W. Aikman, Pipeman Philip Field, and Driver H. Philips.

"Destitution, devastation and desolation followed in the wake of the terrible fire which swept over the central portion of Algiers October 20th, 1895." In his narrative, *The Story of Algiers*, Wm. H. Seymour retells this event from eyewitness accounts. From Seymour's book;

When the alarm was sent in, the three steam engines and truck of Algiers promptly responded. One engine took up a position on the landing of the Canal Street Ferry, the second at a water well on the corner of Morgan and Seguin streets, while the third was located at the well at the corner Bermuda and Morgan streets. The truck was in front of the building in which the fire originated. Chief Engineer Daly was on hand and instructed the men. For a short time it looked very much like the fire would be confined to this building, but as the wells were emptied of water in the short space of half an hour, the one stream from the engine on the ferry landing could not hold it in check.

There were only three steam engine companies, No. 16, No. 17, and No. 18, and one hook and ladder company, No. 6 in Algiers at the time. Charles was Captain of Engine Company No.17. It is certain that his company responded and played a role in fighting this conflagration. It is also certain that other Buhler family households were affected by this event.

Charles married Martha Chestnut, the daughter of Confederate veteran Nathaniel Chestnut and Minerva Roddy, 14 July 1877. Charles and Martha had 9 children with only 4 surviving up to the 1910 census. Records for only 7 children have been located.

## Charles Anton Buhler

**Anthony Buhler** was born 15 July 1878 in New Orleans. He is counted in the 1880 census as 2 years old. He has not been found in the 1900 census or any other records to date. It is probable he did not survive to adulthood.

**Lizzie Buhler** was born January 1880 in New Orleans. She is counted in the 1880 census as 5 months old. She has not been found in the 1900 census or any other records to date. It is probable she did not survive to adulthood.

**Charles Buhler Jr.** was born February 1882 in New Orleans. Charles never married and lived in his parents home until he died 13 Dec 1925. He is buried at the St. Bartholomew cemetery in Algiers, Louisiana.

**Pearl Buhler** was born June 1884 in New Orleans. She married John Hunn 20 Sep 1905. Pearl died 19 Aug 1963 and is buried at the St. Bartholomew cemetery in Algiers, Louisiana.

**Lillie Buhler** was born August 1887 in New Orleans. She died in New Orleans on 21 June 1909.

**George Henry Buhler** was born 13 November 1888 in New Orleans. He married Aline Florence Lusignan 23 December 1919. George Henry died 9 November 1962.

**Unidentified child.**

**Unidentified child.**

**Philip Neville Buhler** was born 21 May 1896 in New Orleans. He married Viola Hazel Fink 3 Feb 1917. Philip was buried at the St. Bartholomew cemetery in Algiers, Louisiana 27 Oct 1959.

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Charles and Martha lived out their married life in Algiers, Louisiana. The family moved frequently in the small town, renting at least 13 different addresses in the 21 years between 1877 and 1898. Their home jumping habits eventually came to an end although they continued to be renters. From 1899 until each of their deaths Charles and Martha lived at 537 Bouny Street.

At the age of 66 Charles was working as a watchman. Charles Anton Buhler died 1 September 1924, he was 70 years old. Martha survived Charles for 8 years until 17 January 1932. She is buried at the St. Bartholomew cemetery in Algiers. During her widow years Martha continued to live at 537 Bouny Street with her son Philip Neville Buhler, his wife Hazel, and their children.

## Charles Anton Buhler

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1. Charles Anton Buhler entry, Orleans Parish Birth Records, volume 14, page 166, Louisiana State Archives, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.