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Firefighter deaths

Indianapolis area firefighters killed in the line of duty 1893 - 2002

Updated: 6-14-2002

DANIEL GLAZIER (March 11, 1873) Glazier, Chief of the Fire Department, was killed during a major fire at the Woodburn-Sarven Wheel Works on Illinois Street. He was inside the building directing his men when a wall collapsed on him and several other firefighters. The other men all survived.

D. FREMONT TAFFE (Nov. 16, 1886) Taffe, driver of Engine #1, a horse-drawn steam engine, was killed in an accident Nov. 15 at the intersection of North and Illinois streets. The engine hit an object lying in the street, throwing Taffe from the driver's seat. Still holding the reins, he was dragged behind the horses and run over by the apparatus. He died one day after the accident.

THOMAS A. BLACK, EPSY STORMER, ANDREW O. CHERRY, ANTHONY VOLTZ, GEORGE FAULKNER, HENRY D. WOODRUFF, ULYSSES GLAZER, JOHN BURKHART, GEORGE W. GLENN, WILLIAM F. JONES, ALBERT HOFFMAN, WILLIAM R. MCGINNIS, DAVID R. LOWRY (March 17, 1890) These 13 men all died as a result of a fire at Bowen-Merrill Publishing House, 18 W. Washington St. Firefighters were working throughout the building, and on the roof when it collapsed into the basement, trapping many men. Burkhart died March 18, Jones died March 22 and McGinnis died Dec. 22 1892.

BENJAMIN F. PLUMMER (Aug. 28, 1893) Plummer was driving a horse-drawn aerial truck en route to a box alarm at East and Pearl streets. As the truck turned from Pennsylvania onto Washington, it hit a utility pole, throwing Plummer from his seat and causing severe head injuries. He died a short time after being taken to the hospital.

WEBSTER ROBERTSON (Dec. 19, 1899) On Dec. 7, the horse-drawn wagon Robertson was riding in hit a large piece of wood on Lewis Street, overturning the wagon. Robertson was thrown from the wagon. He died 12 days later of head injuries.

FRANK E. MANKIN (April 19, 1900) Mankin died from injuries he received March 14 while fighting a fire at C. B. Cones clothing factory at 13 N. Senate Ave., when a wall collapsed on him.

JOHN J. LOFTUS (Feb. 2, 1903) Loftus was loading hay into a fire department supply wagon when an approaching train's whistle startled the wagon's horses. Loftus was thrown from the wagon and run over by the train.

MICHAEL CORLISS (Feb. 4, 1909) Corliss drove a horse-drawn aerial wagon into the path of a train on Feb. 3 while en route to a fire. Corliss suffered severe injuries and died in the hospital hours later.

THOMAS S. SMITH (Nov. 8, 1911) Smith, one of the first four blacks hired by the Indianapolis Fire Department, died instantly when the hose wagon he was riding in was hit



Howard Stahl helped organize efforts to purchase a headstone for Daniel Glazier. The monument was erected in 2000. (Photo by Mike Fender)

by a streetcar. He had retired in 1899 but was reinstated at his request a few months later.

DANIEL DEVENY (June 19, 1913) Deveny was hit by a train while walking along a railroad track near Downtown. NOTE: He was on vacation when the accident occurred and his death was not connected to his job as a firefighter, therefore this is not an actual "line of duty" death, although his name is consistently included on the list.

CLINTON T. LOWES (Jan. 5, 1919) Lowes was killed when the hose wagon he was riding in collided with an Underwriters Salvage Corp. fire apparatus responding to the same fire alarm. Two people on the Salvage Corp. truck also died, and a total of seven other firefighters were injured.

AUGUST H. SCHAFER (Nov. 16, 1919) Schafer died when the engine he was riding in collided with a streetcar while en route to a residence fire.

GEORGE MUMFORD (Dec. 21, 1921) Mumford was driving a fire truck to a box alarm at 11th and Meridian streets when his truck was hit by a car. Mumford was thrown from the truck and died from his injuries a short time later.

CHARLES J. MURPHY (Feb. 13, 1923) Murphy suffered a stroke after responding to an alarm at the English Hotel on Monument Circle. The alarm was caused by a broken steam pipe. He died a few hours later.

LOUIS C. LAUTH (Oct. 7, 1923) Lauth died of head injuries he received while en route to a residence fire when the fire truck he was riding in struck a traffic signal.

FRED E. BARLOW (Jan. 22, 1924) Barlow collapsed and died while fighting a residence fire.

WAYNE HUNTER (March 3, 1924) Hunter died from injuries he received when the fire apparatus he was riding in collided with another fire vehicle responding to the same alarm. He was thrown from the vehicle and died before he reached the hospital.

DAVID A. GRESH (Jan. 18, 1925) Gresh died after collapsing at a fire at 2944 N. Clifton St.

GEORGE E. FRIEL (Oct. 19, 1927) Friel died when overcome by smoke at the scene of a residence fire on Brookside Parkway.

WILLIAM H. WEISHAAR (Nov. 18, 1927) On Nov. 13, Lt. Weishaar was overcome by smoke while fighting an apartment fire at 239 N. Illinois St.. He died five days later. Eight civilians also died in this fire.

FRANK M. YATES (Aug. 3, 1928) Yates died from head injuries he received July 4, 1927, when the fire truck he was driving hit a streetcar.

LEWIS STANLEY (Nov. 1, 1931) Stanley was killed instantly, while en route to what turned out to be a false alarm, when he was thrown from a fire engine which had been hit by an automobile.

GEORGE W. REAM (July 9, 1936) Ream collapsed while fighting a grass fire and could not be revived.

JOHN HART (Dec. 18 1936) Hart died when the fire truck he was riding on was hit by a utility company truck. He was crushed between the two vehicles.

THOMAS SHEEHAN (Jan. 4, 1937) Sheehan died in an explosion while fighting a fire at a grocery store on East Michigan Street.

WILLIAM ARTHUR (Jan. 31, 1937) Arthur was one of 52 firefighters sent to assist with flood relief along the Ohio River in Southern Indiana. He was hospitalized after becoming ill, due to exhaustion and exposure, and died the following day.

EDWARD J. MCGINNIS (Oct. 29, 1937) McGinnis died of head injuries he received Oct. 28 when the fire engine he was driving collided with another fire engine.

MATTHEW DILLANE (Aug. 20, 1939) Dillane died of lung injuries he suffered Aug. 18 while fighting a fire in the chemical laboratory at the city's sewage treatment plant on South Belmont Avenue. He had inhaled chlorine gas.

CLIFFORD C. WOODS (Dec. 16, 1939) Woods was killed instantly when the engine he was riding on hit a large pothole and overturned.

BASIL E. REIS (March 23, 1941) Reis died of injuries he suffered March 13 when he was



Annual memorial service at the Fallen Firefighter's Memorial Plaza in Indianapolis. (Photo by Frank Espich)

thrown off of a fire apparatus when it swerved to avoid a car and overturned.

LEO J. LINDAUER (July 19, 1941) Lindauer died of chest injuries received when the engine he was riding on collided with a gravel truck.

FREDERICK E. FRIES (May 30, 1942) Fries suffered a heart attack while directing suppression efforts at a fire on East 9th Street and died a short time later at the hospital.

REUBEN G. VON OHLEN (Jan. 9, 1944) Von Ohlen suffered a heart attack while assisting at a residence fire.

HERMAN N. LEWIS (March 22, 1944) Lewis died of a heart attack while assisting in laying a

hose line at a fire on South Meridian Street.

HUBERT S. TOOMBS (Dec. 16, 1944) **HAROLD B. ADKINSON** (Dec. 22, 1944) Toombs and Adkinson died of injuries suffered on a test drive of a fire engine Dec. 16. The engine collided with an automobile.

EVERETT L. JACKSON (May 31, 1945) Jackson suffered a heart attack while fighting a fire set during a riot at Fort Benjamin Harrison. Two thousand men were being held in a prison compound at the fort for crimes they committed while serving in the Army.

CLARENCE M. CRAIG (Jan. 17, 1948) Craig died while en route to a car fire when he was thrown from the back of a fire engine that collided with an automobile.

ARTHUR MAAR (Oct. 24, 1952) Maar, who was on the back step of a fire engine, lost his balance while en route to a shed fire and fell off. He died from his injuries shortly after arriving at the hospital.

MORRIS E. PRINCELL (Aug. 16, 1954) Princell died of injuries he suffered Aug. 10 when he fell from the back step of a fire engine while putting on his turnout coat. He initially appeared to be uninjured but collapsed and died of head injuries six days later.

JAMES R. WELCH (May 6, 1958) Welch was overcome while attempting to rescue a victim from inside a burning residence. He was found unconscious inside the home and could not be revived. The report that someone was inside turned out to be false.

JOSEPH TUOHY (Jan. 5, 1960) Tuohy suffered a heart attack while fighting at a fire at 1001 S. Delaware St.

CHARLES A. PIERSON (Nov. 18, 1961) While making an inspection of a hotel basement on Nov. 13, Pierson fell and struck his head on a post. He died of head injuries 5 days later.

ROY POPE JR. (Aug. 17, 1963) Pope became separated from another firefighter during a fire on West 18th Street. He was unconscious when found and died an hour later.

CHARLES R. ENDS (Aug. 14, 1969) Ends died in an explosion in a service station's basement.

RAYMOND F. MOORE (Jan. 13, 1973) **JERRY A. POOLE** (Jan. 14, 1973) The fire engine Moore and Poole were riding on was struck by an automobile while en route to a grass fire. The truck overturned killing Moore instantly. Poole died from his injuries the next day.

THOMAS M. DONOGHUE (June 1, 1977) Donoghue suffered a heart attack while fighting a residence fire on May 31. He died early the next day.

MICHAEL J. KRIECH (Sept. 17, 1979) The fire truck Kriech was riding on was struck by a train on East Troy Avenue on Sept. 10 while en route to an automobile accident. He died of his injuries a week later.

ELWOOD M. GELENIUS, JOHN J. LORENZANO (Feb. 5, 1992) Gelenius and Lorenzano were killed in a flashover at a fire in the Indianapolis Athletic Club's third-floor dining room. Several firefighters were badly burned. One civilian also died.

JOHN D. RIGGIN (Oct. 26, 1995) Riggin suffered a fatal heart attack while fighting a residence fire on the Southside.

WARREN "J.C." SMITH (Aug. 13, 2000) Smith died of oxygen deprivation during an underwater training session.

PAUL JOLLIFF (June 14, 2002) Jolliff drowned during a training dive on his final practice before being certified as a Fire Department dive team member.

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