

False Alarm Bringing Death To Fireman Friend Started New Chief Off on Career as Fire Fighter

Fred Schlorf Offered Services as Volunteer Back on Christmas Eve of 1901, Then Quit Grocery Store Job To Join Department.

By CARL ADAMSHICK.

A false alarm that called No. 7 Fire Company out of its station at Franklin Avenue and Bancroft Street on cold Christmas Eve in 1901, taking the firemen on a ride from which one never returned, had much to do with Fred Schlorf becoming a fireman.

Schlorf, named chief of the Fire Department Wednesday by Safety Director John A. Price, was a grocery clerk and delivery boy at the store of Fred Kocher, when the men of No. 7 went on that fateful ride.

Looking out of the windows of the store which was across from the fire station, he saw the charging horses pull the hose cart out of the station doors, regretting that his tour of duty at the store was not over so that he could go along as a "piker."

Becomes Volunteer.

A short time later word spread through the neighborhood that the hose cart had crashed into a street car at Nebraska Avenue and Hawley Street, killing Capt. John Ward and injuring two firemen.

"Later that night," Chief Schlorf recalled "I made my usual visit to the fire station and volunteered to help out in my spare time until the company received its replacements to take the place of Captain Ward and the injured men.

"From that volunteer service started my career as a fireman. A few days later I told my grocery store employer I was quitting to join the Fire Department. People said I was crazy to enter a business that just cost the life of one of my best friends, but I wanted to be a fireman and I never have regretted my decision."

Three Narrow Escapes.

Chief Schlorf, a fire fighter of the old school, is built for the job. He is a robust man, apparently well able to bear up under rigorous going.

With a frank pleasant smile, he talked freely in a low voice, almost too low at times to be audible, of his 33 years in the department. In those 33 years, he said he never has had a serious accident, although he has escaped death or serious injury on three occasions by a matter of inches.

It was about 20 years ago that he had his first narrow escape.

"I was on the roof of the burning Toledo Auto Parts Co. building



Chief Schlorf at his desk.

on Cherry Street, holding the business end of a fire hose," the chief said. "Smoke was billowing about me and I was pouring water onto the fire, unable to see a foot in any direction.

"As I moved slowly in the direction of the fire, I suddenly felt myself stepping off into space. I clutched wildly at the hose and tried to regain my footing, but over I went, head first.

"I must have fallen 30 feet when the slack in the hose which I was clutching brought me up short. The hook on the nozzle ripped into my rubber coat and flipped me over and with my fall broken, I landed lightly at the bottom of an air shaft, safe and uninjured."

Slides Down Ladder.

A short time later a truck on which Schlorf was riding to a fire skidded on an icy pavement and crashed into a fountain at Cherry Street and Spielbusch Avenue. Sev-



The new chief slides the pole.

eral firemen were injured in the crash and Schlorf was saved only because he landed on top of another man.

The chief's third narrow escape was in a fire at the Vulcan Iron Works. On that occasion he was at the top of a ladder on a three-story building when the cornice of the building began to collapse and the walls started falling.

"I straddled the ladder and started to slide," the chief nar-

les. "When I hit the pavement rolled like a cavalryman when he falls from a horse. A second later the falling wall hit the street, missing me by inches."

His Lucky Year.

Born in Toledo May 1, 1880, Chief Schlorf became a fireman Jan. 16, 1902. He was promoted to a lieutenancy in 1909, to a captaincy in 1914 and was named district chief in 1927.

Pleased at his appointment to the top position in the Fire Department, the chief said 1935 must be his lucky year.

"My first bit of luck," he said, came recently when my daughter Mrs. Jack Cassaubon, had a son making me a grandfather. Now I get this job. I guess that's getting the breaks."

Chief Schlorf is a widower. He lives with his daughter and son-in-law at 2737 Upton Avenue. His salary as district chief was \$2257 a year. As chief he will receive \$3205.

More Men Needed.

On his plans for the Fire Department, Chief Schlorf was non-committal. He said he intends to increase the department's efficiency and provide Toledo with the best possible fire service.

The department, he said, needs some additional men and some new equipment. For the present, however, he said, he will try to do the best job possible with the men and equipment at his disposal.

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Fred Schlorf

Fire Division Head Retired In 1946

Fred T. Schlorf, chief of the Toledo fire division before his retirement in 1946, died yesterday in the Collingwood Park Rest Home, 18 Collingwood Blvd.

Mr. Schlorf, 68, a lifelong resident of Toledo, retired on pension two years ago because of illness. He had been a fireman 44 years.

Elks Lodge Services

Surviving are his daughter, Mrs. John F. Cassaubon, 2737 Upton Ave. grandchildren, John F. Cassaubon Jr., and Diane Cassaubon, and sister, Mrs. Mary Gordon, Toledo.

The Elks Lodge with their chaplain, the Rev. Harold L. Davis officiating, will conduct services 1:30 p.m. Wednesday in the Garner Funeral Home. Burial will be in Toledo Memorial Park Cemetery.

Pallbearers Listed

Active pallbearers will be Deputy Fire Chiefs Walter Ringger and Joseph McLaughlin and District Chiefs Roy Shea, James Conroy, Frank O. Carson and Alvin Eaton.

Chief Schlorf Modernized Toledo's Fire Department

Perfect Record Maintained In 44 Years
Of Service; 11 Years As Division Head

Story of Chief Schlorf's death on Page 1

Fred T. Schlorf, who died yesterday, retired April 5, 1946, after 11 years as chief of Toledo's fire division, during which he modernized it from an undermanned force equipped with antiquated apparatus into an up-to-date 400-man organization.



FRED T. SCHLORF
Served 44 years

Honorary pallbearers include Fire Chief Patrick J. Daly, Deputy Chief Henry L. Wintermantle, District Chief Roy Davis, Chief Inspector Earl R. Walterschied, Supt. Fred Madden, Fred L. Mollenkopf, Cliff Quinn, Harold Green, Ervin McDonough, Frank Lawrence, Lieut. Frank Lichtenwagner, Capt. William Malone, William Ahlert, William Rueli, Police Chief Ray E. Allen and City Manager George N. Schoonmaker.

Blade 5-17-48

Under Chief Schlorf's leadership, equipment was replaced or streamlined at the division's shops at No. 8 Engine House; a drill tower was built at No. 23 Engine House to end the Sunday morning "exhibitions" firemen had been performing for years; and two rescue squad cars, whose personnel have been credited with saving hundreds of lives, were put into service.

Perfect Record

Chief Schlorf's 44 years of service were forced to an end when back injuries he received seven years ago in an automobile accident near Heavsville, O., resulted in a lengthy sick leave.

In his more than four decades of service he had the distinction of having a perfect record—he was never late for duty, never reprimanded or punished.

A former "fire piker," he joined the division Jan. 19, 1902, two weeks after his friend, Capt. John Ward, was killed and two firemen were injured when their horse-drawn ladder truck was struck by a streetcar at Dorr St. and Collingwood Blvd. while responding to a false alarm from Dorr and Heston Sts. Mr. Schlorf had watched the firemen leave No. 7 Engine House, Bancroft St. and Franklin Ave.

Rise Was Rapid

The former grocery clerk's rise in the fire ranks was steady. On July 1, 1909, he was promoted to lieutenant; he became a captain April 1, 1914, and attained the rank of district chief June 8, 1927.

On June 26, 1935, after heading the eligibility list for first assistant chief, he instead was appointed by John C. Price, then safety director, to head the fire division. A state law enacted a short time previous had caused the retirement of Chief Fred Myers.

He had experienced several narrow escapes from injury while fighting fires.

In 1915 as a captain he was leading a hose crew in a blaze at the Toledo Auto Parts Co. on Cherry St. when he plunged down a 40-foot air shaft, only to be saved 10 feet from the bottom of the hole when his raincoat snagged on a hose nozzle and broke his fall.

Another time he was riding a fire truck which struck a fountain at Cherry St. and Spielbusch Ave. Several firemen were injured, but he stopped off unscathed.