

# FIREMAN, OVERCOME BY SMOKE DURING \$10,000 WEST END BLAZE, DIES

Henry Rumpel Falls Back Insensible Into Companion's Arms While Helping Fight Blaze at Plant of Elliott Packing Co. Pulmotor Fails to Save Him.

Frozen Hydrants Make Use of Water Impossible for Half Hour, Giving Small Fire Good Start—Members of Three Families Make Escape in Safety.

Fireman Henry C. Rumpel lost his life, property valued at \$10,000 was destroyed and three families, including nine children were driven from their beds into below zero weather, homeless because water hydrants in the neighborhood were frozen, delaying for 30 minutes action on a fire which late last night broke out in the basement of the three-story building at 2116 West Michigan street.

The second floor, the home of the now destitute families, was completely destroyed.

The ground floor and basement, used as a warehouse for hides by the Elliott Packing company, was damaged by water only, and \$16,000 worth of stock remains practically intact.

Rumpel, age 29 years and married, was working on the second floor, in the thickest of the smoke that rolled from the blazing interior. Other members of Company No. 2 were near, Pipeman J. Fisher standing at his side. His collapse was heralded by no complaint of distress or outcry, Rumpel suddenly falling back into Fisher's arms. Believing that he was suffering only temporary exhaustion, his companions first carried the man to a window in the rear of the burning structure. A few moments later they took him to the street, by way of a rear staircase, and across the road to the warerooms of the Winkler Bros. candy factory, 2111-2113 West Michigan street.

Such crude methods for restoring their comrade as were at the command of firemen and bystanders were employed at once, and police headquarters was notified. Jailer Louis Johnson and Patrolman Stewart, bringing with them the pulmotor, responded to the summons in the police emergency ambulance. They reached the Winkler Bros. plant before Drs. Ekblad, Ayad and Greeley. The prompt and energetic efforts of the men operating the device had been futile, the doctors announced after an examination. However, loath to give up, the men worked with the reviving apparatus for several minutes over the body of the dead man.

Rumpel was stricken at 11:49 o'clock. He was pronounced dead one hour and 10 minutes later. The dead man, who lived at 1702 West Second street, is survived by his widow and one brother, Herman Rumpel, a contractor, 413½ East First street. The body was removed to Crawford & Olson's undertaking rooms.

#### Formerly Was Switchman.

Rumpel, who previous to joining the fire department Dec. 1, 1907, was a switchman for the Northern Pacific Railway company and had lived in St. Paul, was during all the time of his service here a pipeman of engine company No. 2.

#### Woman Discovers Fire.

An alarm for the fatal fire was rung into fire headquarters at 10:25 o'clock. Companies 1, 2 and 4 responded. The blaze, which, it is believed, started from a stove in the basement, was discovered by Mrs. William Koski, one of the tenants, who, as well as the others, had retired for the night. She detected the odor of smoke and aroused Fred Eggers, the only man in the building, who, upon peering from a window, saw smoke rolling from the basement and turned in the alarm. In the building in addition to Mr. and Mrs. Eggers and their four small children, and Mrs. Koski, who also has four children, were Mrs. Maurice Brindle and her small daughter.

All hurrying through smoke-filled corridors, and startled from slumber into a frenzy of fright, reached the street by a stairway, clad only in scanty night attire. They were offered shelter by neighbors, with whom they will live until other homes have been provided.

The second floor tenants suffered the loss of all their clothing and house furnishings, valued, in each instance, at \$500. Brindle and Koski were out of the city, being at work in a lumber camp.

The belief is general that the blaze would not have reached the proportions of a fire, had not the hydrants at Twenty-second avenue West and Superior street been frozen and the one at Twenty-first avenue West and Superior street otherwise out of order.

The hydrant at Twenty-first avenue West and Michigan street also was frozen. The hydrant at Twenty-second avenue finally was thawed out by means of a steamer.

The building was owned by Louis Zalk of the Duluth Iron & Metal company.