

## **William McDiarmid**

Members of the Ottawa Fire Department were well aware that coming to work on Victoria Day was always cause for concern. The tradition of setting off firecrackers always meant they would be in for a busy day. Children playing with firecrackers had set off a fire in the Florence Paper Warehouse at the corner of Redpath and Sussex streets. The alarm was received at 10:30 in the evening. This was not to be a small nuisance fire the fire quickly spread to the Laurentian Dairy Warehouse Fire crews from eight stations were summoned to the late night second alarm fire, including the ladder truck from Number three Station on Laurier Avenue at Wilbrod. The driver Napoleon Quintel took his seat next to Sergeant Carl Dunning who was in charge of the Company. William MacDiarmid and rookie fireman Robert Maharry road on the running board.

As the responding truck entered the intersection of Dalhousie and St Patrick streets the a car came from the side street and rammed the vehicle. Both firemen MacDiarmid and Maharry were thrown from the truck, which stopped in the next block. The two injured firemen were rushed to the hospital, which was nearby. Maharry suffered injuries to his leg and hip while fireman MacDiarmid's were much more serious and he died the next morning in hospital.

William McDiarmid was born October 9, 1899 in Buckingham Quebec and joined the Ottawa Fire Department July 1, 1923. He was thirty-one years old at the time of his death. He was married with one son and was interred in the United Church Cemetery in Buckingham Quebec.

William MacDiarmid was the second fireman killed while responding on Number Three Truck. Fireman Bernard Thomas was similarly killed in 1914 on a horse drawn unit. Responses to fires have proved almost as dangerous as fighting fires over the years and remains so to this day.