

M. A. Nelson
Interviewer,
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Interview with
Mr. Art Johnson
Enid, Oklahoma
(Former Chief of Enid Fire Department)

Our first fire station in Enid was located on the north side of the square, on the city or county block where the old War Savings or American Legion hut stood. That is in the center of the block. They later moved it on to the site where the present post office is, but August 10, 1909, they moved it to its present site, one half block south of the square on Independence Street.

On January 11, 1913, we were driving a Robinson Fire Wagon south on Independence. Will Gensman was driving a car from the west on Main. He failed to slow down for the intersection. There were no stop lights. He hit our right front wheel and turned our fire engine clear around and on its side. His own car turned clear around and upside down. A man who saw me said I turned three somersaults in the air and lit on my head on the sidewalk. I can still

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feel the pain at the top of my spinal column. One of the fireman got a car bolt clear through his wrist. Another, a bolt clear through the back of his ankle. A third broke his collar bone and shoulder blade. A fellow on the wagon next to me got hit with a pitchfork, which was on the water hose. One of the fellows in the auto with Will Gensman did not get hurt. Another was scratched up. Will was killed.

In treating one of the firemen, Dr. Lemon laid the scalp back over the man's ears and washed the wound. It looked as if he were going to scalp the man.

The earliest fire system Knid had was a push cart with a hose reeled on it. This was about all they had when the disastrous fire swept the entire south side of the square. Afterwards they secured a horse and ladder outfit. Now they have fire trucks but the service is still far from adequate.

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We have an old walnut clock about one foot by two feet by six inches and a hundred years old which still keeps good time. We also have an old wash stand made of walnut which is very old. These pieces were brought into Salem, Iowa, in 1837, two years before that state was admitted into the union.