

Man Dies Trapped In Flash Apartment Fire

Picture On Page 21A

Lawrence Bawden, 40, died early this morning in a fire which raced through a dwelling at 1339 Lucerne Lane and trapped him in a back bedroom before he could make his way out.

The fire destroyed the roof and caused such extensive damage inside the two apartment

dwelling it was declared a complete loss. But it did not burn the bedroom in which Bawden was found.

The examining physician at the Fresno County General Hospital, where Bawden was pronounced dead on arrival, said burns covered four fifths of his body.



Lawrence Bawden

The doctor said it appeared Bawden had been seared as he attempted to leave the bedroom.

Deputy Coroner Alphon P. Dickinson said Bawden apparently was overcome by smoke and fumes.

Bawden was a former employe in the Fresno office of the federal alcohol and tobacco tax unit and apparently had been living in the apartment since October.

Inspector Gilbert Lauder of the fire prevention bureau said the fire probably was caused by a cigaret. He estimated the loss at \$8,000. The structure is owned by Mrs. Mary A. Waterman.

The alarm was sounded at 12:21 AM by Mrs. Theodore

Condo of 1329 Lucerne Lane. When firemen arrived, the flames were 50 feet high.

Hose Through Windows

Firemen had to play several hoses through doors and windows before the blaze was reduced sufficiently to permit them to search for possible victims.

While Mrs. Condo was turning in the alarm, her husband dashed to the blazing building and tried to enter. He kicked down the front door and broke a front window but was unable to enter because of the intense heat and smoke.

Mrs. Condo said she noticed the blaze when she went to look at her sleeping daughter and "heard a pop like a garbage can was being shut. When I looked out the window the whole back of the house was on fire."

The apartment next to Bawden's is rented by Mr. and Mrs. Harold Hughes, who were away from home.

The blaze lighted up the neighborhood. Approximately 100 persons, many in night clothes, watched as the firemen battled the blaze.

The coroner's office is attempting to locate Bawden's estranged wife, Hazel, who is believed to live at 147 Glenn Avenue.

The body was taken to Stephens & Bean, where funeral arrangements are pending.