

Forde Beeten

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Forde and Grace Beeten and their four children – Arthur, Louis, Herbert and Eleanor, moved to Johnstown from Fort Lupton, Colorado in 1915. Forde was transferred from the Colorado Condensed Milk Company there to the Johnstown factory as manager.

In June 1916, Forde suffered severe burns while troubleshooting the cause of a power outage at the condensery. He was replacing a fuse when he came into contact with a live wire. The current was strong enough to cause him to jerk backward. In doing so, he bumped his head against a line carrying 22,000 volts, and the current burned a hole in his skull.

As Forde fell backward, his right arm caught another wire, and he sustained a second large burn under his arm and shoulder area.

His brother, Orville, who also worked at the condensery and witnessed the incident, shut off the current and would be credited for saving his brother's life. At first, Forde was believed to be dead, but within several minutes, he regained consciousness and talked with the men around him.

Forde was taken to the Longmont Hospital and treated for his burns. With continued tissue debridement over time, he recovered from his injuries. Forde later became Fieldman at the condensery, and the last position he held was Babcock Tester. He retired in May 1949 after working for the company for 46 years.

Soon after, he and Grace drove up to their cabin in the Big Thompson canyon near Estes Park, and Forde suffered a stroke or a heart attack (sources conflict here) on the 4th of July. He and Grace stayed with their son Arthur and his wife, Charlotte (Mallonee) Beeten, in Fort Lupton. As a registered nurse, Charlotte cared for her father-in-law at their home for several weeks until he was admitted to the Presbyterian hospital in Denver. He died there on September 28, 1949 at age 65.

Forde was well known and respected in Johnstown. He and Grace were both involved in the community, and Forde served on the Town Board for several years. He also served with the Johnstown volunteer fire department and was the Fire Chief when the first firetruck was purchased in 1945.

Sources: *A Tribute To Johnstown*, Rebecca S. Healy, 1977; *The Courier Farmer*, June 27, 1916; *The Fort Lupton Press*, June 23, 1916; and numerous articles from *The Johnstown Breeze*.



Forde and Grace Beeten in front of the home they built at 10 Denver Ave. in 1915.



The Historic Parish House and Museum

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