

FLAMES SWEEP DEXTER STORES

Four Alarms Sounded For Fire In South Boston Early This Morning

Upper Floors Used For Storage Of Wool—Damage Will Be Very Heavy

A four-alarm fire in the Dexter Stores at 164-168 A st, South Boston, which started about 2:15 this morning, filled the entire district with dense clouds of smoke and caused very heavy damage.

The first story of the building, which is a five-story brick structure, is occupied by offices and the upper floors are used for storage of wool. The fire started on the third floor and caused an automatic alarm, which was followed by the first box alarm.

As soon as the firemen arrived a second alarm was sounded. Chief Taber responded in person to this and, determining at all costs to confine the blaze to the one building, caused a third and fourth alarms to be sounded.

The flames broke through the windows of the plant soon after the first alarm was sounded and the brilliant light and the extremely heavy smoke aroused the entire district.

Fortunately there are no dwelling houses near the building, but another large warehouse immediately abuts it and it was with a view of making sure that the fire did not penetrate this that Chief Taber caused all available apparatus to be summoned so that the flames could be drowned out.

HOT AIR BLAST TRAPS FIREMEN

Men Near Death in South Boston Blaze

Dexter Stores Building Loss Over \$200,000

Injured Fighters Are Rescued on Ladders

Damage of between \$200,000 and \$400,000 resulted from a fire early yesterday in the big building of the Dexter Stores at 166 and 163 A st, South Boston, according to officials of the company and the Fire Department. The stock probably will be a total loss.

The stubborn battle waged against the flames continued from 2 a m until long after daylight. After the second alarm Chief Taber took charge and expressed himself pleased with the work of the firemen. The building, to which the flames were confined, was packed high on three floors with bales of wool and cotton waste.

The fire was spectacular. When District Chief O'Brien, responding to the automatic alarm, saw the blaze, he ordered a bell alarm, which was quickly followed by a second. Acting Chief Capt Edwin Richardson of South Boston responded to the first alarm and was sent by Dist Chief O'Brien into the building with the men of Engine 1. Hardly had they entered the blazing storehouse when a hot-air explosion caused them to be ordered out. As they sought to leave they found they had been trapped by flames which had cut 'em behind them. A ladder was raised and in this way they got out of the building.

Hosemen Dorleare and Loughlin of Engine 39 were both slightly injured by the explosion. The other members of the company forced to leave through the window were Capt William P. Mahoney and hosemen Howard, Fallon and Coomey.

Members of Engine 1's crew rescued were Capt William Field, hosemen Whitting, Barry, Gaddis, Nolan, Kelly and Foley. Acting Chief Richardson was rescued at the same time.

During the fire glass was flying from broken windows. Several members of Ladder 18 were cut and required medical attention. They were Capt John Murphy, laddermen Thomas J. Sheridan, Michael Connelly and Douglas Keefe.

With Chief Taber were Deputies Sennott, Fox and Shallow. Deputy Fox was placed in the rear, while Deputy Shallow and Deputy Sennott divided the front and south side.

Chief Taber established his quarters in front of the building. Acting Fire Commissioner William J. Casey arrived after the fourth alarm had been sounded and remained until long after the fire was under control.

For a long time the flames threatened neighboring buildings. The other two buildings of the Dexter stores were closely guarded by firemen.

The cause of the fire was not ascertained, but it was the general impression among fire officials that the extreme warm weather, acting on the oil-soaked wool and cotton waste in the building, caused spontaneous combustion.