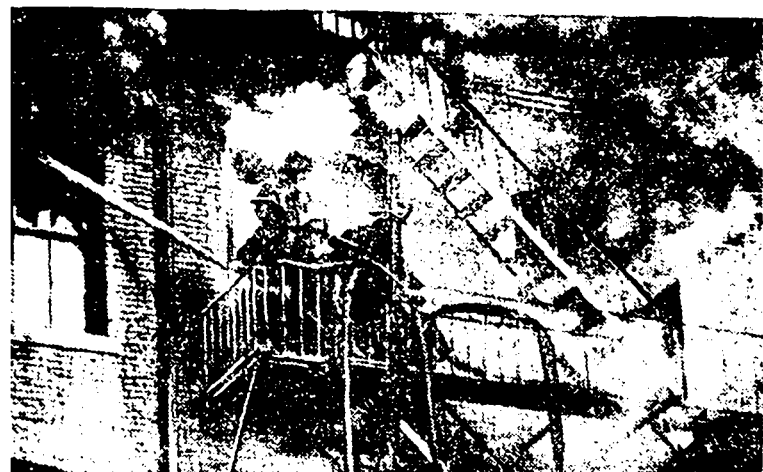


SCORE HURT IN \$300,000 FIRE

Engine Crashes Into Wall; Smoke Fells Firemen



FIGHTING THE FIRE FROM FIRE ESCAPE. 5TH FLOOR OF
BUILDING, CONGRESS ST, SOUTH BOSTON.

Four Alarm Blaze in Fairbanks Co. Building, South Boston

Several firemen were overcome by smoke, a score of others, receiving minor injuries, miraculously escaped death, and thousands of dollars damage was caused in a spectacular four-alarm fire which raged furiously for several hours last evening in the

six-story brick building, 374-394 Congress st, South Boston.

The first three floors of the building are occupied by the Fairbanks

Continued on the Eighth Page.

SCORE HURT IN \$300,000 FIRE

Continued From the First Page.

Company, scales, and the upper three floors are said to be occupied by Thomson & Kelly. The fire was confined to the upper two floors on which there were bales of wool and textiles and supplies stored.

Late last night, Chief John O. Taber estimated the damage by the fire as at least \$300,000.

He added that the fire undoubtedly started from a fumigation process, stating that when the firemen first arrived on the scene, they were almost overcome with dense sulphur fumes. He said that the Fire Department had been notified several days ago that the building would be fumigated.

It was one of the hardest battles the Boston firemen have had recently. The heavy smoke, combined with the fumes of sulphur in the top floor, made the work hazardous, and only the bravery and expertness of the firefighters enabled them to confine the fire to one building.

Thousands Watch Fire

With the flames continually bursting from the sides of the building and through the roof, lighting up the sky so as to be seen for miles around, the fire was spectacular and attracted thousands of people to the scene. Automobilists were lined along the Summer-st bridge looking down on the scene of the fire.

The building, which covers practically an entire city block, is located in the center of the so-called high value district, the greatest fire hazard in the city. It is one of the few places where the chief of the entire department responds on the first alarm.

Chief John O. Taber was on duty from the beginning, directing the firemen.

Engine Crashes Into Wall

Excitement was intense in the entire section. Several persons watching the fire were slightly bruised in the crowds pushing back and forth endeavoring to gain points of vantage to watch the blaze.

Harry Irons, 68, of 92 Bowdoin st, West End, a watchman, received minor injuries in an accident that nearly cost the lives of five firemen on the way to the fire.

Engine 43, located at Andrew sq, South Boston, was hurrying to the blaze on the third alarm. As the apparatus was moving along A st near Richards st, a couple of blocks from the fire, the steering gear broke. The engine truck turned sharply to the right and crashed head-on into the wall at 169 A st. Irons, the watchman at the building, was pinned against the wall, and was hurried to the City Hospital.

Firemen Hurlled to Street

The firemen were thrown to the street. They were traveling at a high rate of speed, and the impact caused the truck to practically overturn. Lieut Charles A. Ingersoll was in command, sitting beside the driver, William J. Coughlin. Both were badly shaken up. Hoseman Michael J. Riley is thought to have broken a rib, and was taken to the Carney Hospital. The other hosemen, John Sweeney and John J. Murphy, were also badly shaken up, but they refused medical treatment and assisted in fighting the fire.

The fire was discovered in the fourth floor of the building. The automatic alarm 1225 was sounded at 6:07, and, after the firemen had fought unsuccessfully for a time, the bell alarm was sounded at 6:25 from box 7112, at the corner

of Congress and A sts. Chief Taber responded and at 6:30 the second came in. The third alarm followed at 6:39 and, as the blaze seemed to be getting beyond control, the fourth was sounded at 6:54, bringing apparatus from nearly every section of the city.

Smoke Envelops Section

The entire section was enveloped in heavy smoke. In the upper three floors, where the fire raged, Johnson & Kelly Company had stored army supplies, mostly wool.

Two weeks ago, the floors were fumigated and the Fire Department was notified that any smoke from the building might be caused by the sulphur used. Again yesterday, the floors were fumigated, and when the smoke began to issue from the upper floors it was thought that it was only the sulphur fumes.

Engines 39, 25, 7, 15 and Fire Boat 14, and Ladders 18 and 8 responded on the first alarm with Chief Taber. Tower 3 also came on the scene, and the men were placed around the large structure. Some of the firemen were rushed up the stairs, but the smoke became too heavy and they were forced to the street again. Heavy lines of hoses were used, on all sides, with a number of firemen massing on the roof of the Sherwin, Williams Paint Company, a two-story brick building in the rear of the Fairbanks Company.

Fireman Collapses

On the second alarm Engines 38, 26, 1, 3 and 47 hurried to the scene. Edward Bowler, aged 34, of 30 Nonquit st, Dorchester, a hoseman on Engine 3, was sent up with his crew to the fourth floor. He worked his way along with the line of hose, but suddenly he felt faint and rushed to the stairs. He made his way down the four flights, but as the cool air reached him he collapsed and fell to the ground. He was taken to the City Hospital.

Additional aid came when the third and fourth alarms came in, but it took nearly two hours before the fire was really under control. For a time it seemed as though the blaze would spread to the adjoining buildings.

Firemen Driven Back

The firemen on the street, handling the towers and the heavy lines of hose, were greatly handicapped by the heavy smoke and the sulphur fumes. They were forced to move back continually to rest their eyes. A great number were overcome for a short period.

It would not be possible to list the names of all those overcome that way, as they rested a moment and then took up their duty again.

Firemen who received slight bruises and painful cuts to the fingers and arms were treated by the doctors from the City Hospital on the scene, and then went back on the job.

Henry S. Marden, of 8 Puritan av, Dorchester, engineer on Engine 38, for years a fireman, sustained a possible fracture of one of his ribs, but he refused medical assistance, and kept at work at his engine.

The accident occurred when the connection between the hose and the engine broke and the great force of the water which went straight at Marden threw him heavily against another engine. He received a severe blow to his side, and although he paused a moment to let the doctor examine him, he refused to go to the hospital, as advised.

Firemen who had been on the job from the start were forced to rest and the Salvation Army lassies, with tonic and sandwiches, proved a real benefit to the tired men.

Handicapped by Too Few Hydrants

The firemen were considerably handicapped by the lack of fire hydrants in that vicinity, and some high-powered engines were idle, as all available hydrants were in use.

There were three towers at the fire, two directly in front of the building on Congress st and the other on Stillings st.

At the beginning, heavy smoke filled the street and made things uncomfortable for blocks around. Later, when the fire was actually under control, the flames burst out from all the windows in the upper two floors and through the roof. The fire burned for hours,

the firemen confining it to the upper stories. People in every section of Greater Boston could see the blaze, which lighted the sky for hours.

Sparks Endanger Freight Sheds

Shortly before 10 o'clock the flames were under control. Flames still raged then in the center of the building, but they were later drowned out by tons of water poured on them by Tower 3, and Engines 1 and 2, stationed in the New Haven freight yards, and dozens of lines from the front and other side of the building, including five lines which were placed from the windows of the fourth floor of the building at 34-32 Congress st.

When the flames first broke through the roof about 8 o'clock, sparks were showered on the freight houses, freight cars and also on the roof of the two-story brick building which adjoins the rear of the burned building and in which there is about \$200,000 worth of paints, oils and other inflammables, the property of Sherwin Williams, dealers in paints and varnishes. William H. Ship, sales manager of Sherwin Williams, moved valuable records and papers from the building to the house of Engine 3 on Congress st.

When the sparks began to shower on the roof of this building Chief Taber ordered several details with hose lines to guard the roof and put out all sparks.

Many Firemen Collapse

Shortly before 11 o'clock many firemen who came to the street in order to get air collapsed from the effects of the smoke they had inhaled. Capt Hamilton McClay of Ladder 8 fell to the sidewalk and he was removed to the Haymarket Relief Hospital in an ambulance. Hoseman John Ryan of Engine 28 suffered so badly that he was removed to the engine house nearby and had to be carried before midnight. Hoseman Arthur Short of Engine 8 was removed to the Haymarket Relief Hospital, overcome from smoke and sulphur fumes. Many others were treated on the sidewalks by physicians from the Haymarket Relief Hospital.

At midnight there was considerable fire on the fifth and sixth floors.

One of the new engines recently purchased, which was to be tested today by fire underwriters, was sent to the scene of the fire by officers of the American Life Insurance Company and manned by employees of the company. The engine worked effectively and assisted the Fire Department materially in the fighting of the blaze.

Continually throughout the entire fire details from Engines 1, 6, 25 and 28 worked lines from a fire escape on the fifth floor of the building and were constantly in peril. On several occasions the men were ordered to the ground by officers, but as soon as the smoke and flames would clear away from the escape they would return to the position. Many times throughout the night they were enveloped with smoke for periods of five minutes at a time, and often flames could be seen shooting over their helmets.

Rescue Squad at Work

George W. Driscoll of Ladder 5 continued to work at the fire with a couple of bones fractured in his right hand. He stopped only long enough to have the hand attended to temporarily by Dr. C. H. Falstead of the Haymarket Relief Hospital, who, assisted by medical students P. J. Connors and C. A. Galligan, treated scores of firemen at the building and took several others to the Relief Station in the ambulance.

Chief Taber, just before midnight, called the rescue squad and summoned also a squad of 30 additional men, the latter to fill the places of those who were overcome and others who were injured.

The fire was still alive late this morning, with a blaze periodically breaking through the roof. The firemen settled down for an all-night fire shortly after midnight and at 1:30 they were working in shifts.

Before the rescue squad arrived, the firemen were falling frequently from ammonia fumes in the upper part of the building. On the fourth floor cans of ammonia prostrated several firemen and forced the others to retreat quickly. With the arrival of the rescue men, equipped with gas-masks, work went along more safely and effectively.

Two firemen overcome were Lieut Walter Davies of Engine 29 and John McIntyre of Engine 1. Both were sent to the Haymarket Relief Hospital. McIntyre was overcome on the 6th floor and carried down the ladder by members of Rescue Company 1.