

SIX SAVED FROM FIRE

Hotel Gone at Forest Hills.

Match Under Piazza Believed Cause.

Four Hundred Guests in Wild Rush For Safety.

Five Thousand Witness Spectacular Blaze.

A fire that swept through the north section of the Forest Hills hotel, at the junction of Hyde Park av and Walkhill st. Forest Hills, yesterday afternoon, drove 400 guests in the building in a stampede to the street and did damage to the hotel and adjacent property estimated at between \$16,000 and \$18,000.

The heroes of the fire, that swept through the wooden building with appalling swiftness, were Ex-Senator Frank Seiberlich, proprietor of the hotel, and his manager, Frank J. Jeager, and assistant manager Stephen Walsh, who forced their way through the smoke-filled rooms and rescued Mrs William F. O'Connor and her 4-year-old son William, Mrs John O'Connor, all guests, and Mrs Sarah Leach, Mrs Mary Brady and Mrs Josephine Benson, domestics. They were cared for at the residence of Patrick J. Rooney, 38 Hyde Park av.

The damage to the building, which is owned by Gabriel Gougeon, is estimated at \$5000; to contents and furnishings, owned by Frank Seiberlich, \$9000; hotel Meyer, a three-story apartment house, 49 and 51 Hyde Park av, owned by William Miller, \$1200; Joseph Bornino, to furnishings of his apartment in hotel Meyer, \$300; building 3770 Washington st, owned by William Miller, occupied as a saloon by John J. Walsh, \$300.

Heavy Sunday Business.

The hotel is a three-story wooden structure, 51 to 61 Hyde Park av, having a frontage of 158 feet on Hyde Park av and a long frontage on Walkhill st. It is triangular in shape, and contains 35 rooms. The north portion, numbered 51, 53, 55 Hyde Park av, and running back to Walkhill st, was the part burned.

That section of the hotel contained a large winerom in the basement, containing \$6000 worth of wines and liquors and a rathskeller. On the first floor were the office and two large rooms; saloon on the second, nine private dining rooms, with parlor and kitchen at the rear; on the third floor, 12 chambers and bath rooms.

Sunday is one of the busiest days at the hotel, which caters to a very large out-of-town patronage. Yesterday the business was unusually heavy and at the time of the fire there were seated about the tables in the serving rooms about 400 guests.

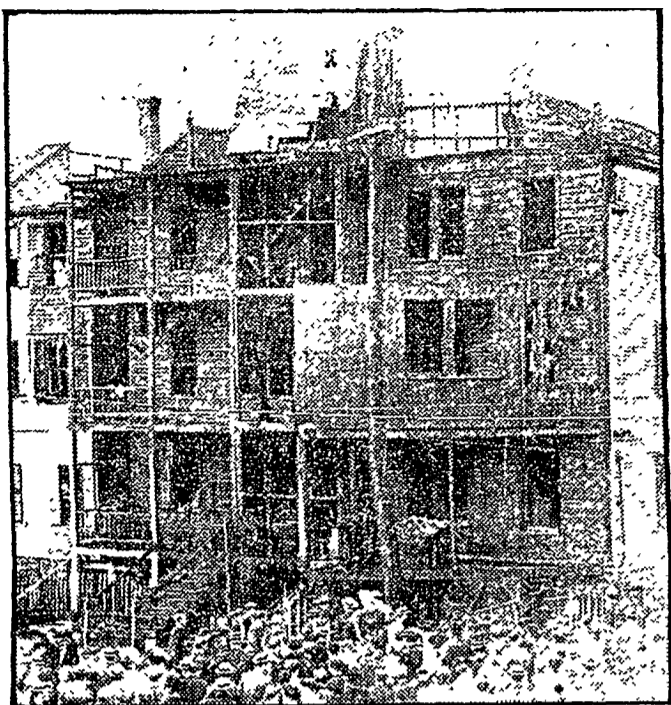
These rooms were on the street floor, and directly back of them is a large piazza that runs to above the second story. There is an exit from the hotel at the end of the piazza on the Walkhill-st side.

It was under this piazza that the fire was first discovered by John Reilly, an employe, who gave the alarm. Mr Seiberlich was behind the desk at the east end of the serving room, and manager Jeager and assistant manager Walsh were also in the office.

Alp' of them saw the smoke curling into the windows of the serving room and the 400 guests also saw the fire

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RUINS OF FOREST HILLS HOTEL AS VIEWED FROM WALK HILL ST.



SIX SAVED FROM FIRE

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making rapid headway up the side of the rear of the hotel and getting a hold on the dry timber of the two-story piazza.

Saved in Nick of Time.

Almost at once the flames were taking their way through the windows into the building, driven by a strong westerly wind, and the guests tumbled over each other in their haste to escape.

Mr Selberlich quickly rang the hotel fire alarm, then telephoned station 13 that the hotel was on fire; shut the cash register and closed the door of the safe, and with manager Jeager and assistant manager Walsh hurried through the hotel and rescued the women mentioned.

Mrs William O'Connor was carried out of the building by Stephen Walsh and her little son William by Mr Selberlich. During this time the fire department of the hotel, composed of Otto Luskarg, William Connolly, John Eberhardt, William Reinhardt, Peter White and John Kelly, got out a line of hose and endeavored to check the flames.

Knowing that Mrs Leach, Mrs Benson and Mrs Brady were at work in the kitchen in the second story, directly above the heart of the fire, Mr Selberlich and Stephen Walsh forced their way through the smothering smoke that now filled the building, up the narrow stairway to the second story, and brought out the three women in the nick of time. A few minutes later the room in which they had been was a mass of flames.

Second Alarm Ordered.

Patrolman George Keyes of division 13 was on Washington st not far from the rear of the hotel when he saw a sheet of flame shoot almost across Walkhill st. He jumped upon a passing car and ordered the motorman to make all speed to box 531, at the corner of Washington and Morton sts.

Someone on Hyde Park av called to a passing driver of a hack that the hotel was on fire and to rush to box 592 at the corner of Weldhill and Wachusett sts. He whipped up his horses and reached box 592 before patrolman Keyes sounded box 531.

The fire made such rapid headway, fed by the hard wood of the hotel and fanned by a strong westerly breeze, that when Dist Chief Michael J. Mulligan got sight of the fire he ordered a second alarm before he left his wagon.

Engine 28 and ladder 10 of Jamaica Plain was the first apparatus to arrive. Engine 45 and ladder 16, Roslindale, followed closely. When the firemen reached the scene the flames were eating up the rear of the hotel on the Walkhill side and had a good hold on the roof and one side of the hotel Meyer.

A four-foot alley separated the north wall of the Forest Hills hotel and the hotel Meyer. The wind was driving the flames against the latter and Dist Chief Mulligan knew that he must make his fight there. He placed men with a line of hose at that point and, although the heat was intense, they succeeded in holding the fire in check.

The building 3770 Washington st caught fire but the flames were quickly extinguished.

Fight Watched by 5000.

The second alarm brought additional apparatus from Roxbury, West Roxbury and Mattapan.

The fire, which was most spectacular, was witnessed by more than 5000 people, who crowded Hyde Park av, Walkhill st and Washington st. A crowd of 2000 men, women and children watched from the raised tracks of the N-Y, N-H & H until driven

from their dangerous position by the police.

Ladders were thrown up on the Hyde Park-av front of the hotel, on the hotel Meyer and against the rear walls of the Forest Hills hotel. From there the firemen poured a deluge of water directly into the heart of the fire. The heat from the fire was almost unbearable. Senior hoseman Wesley Newdick of engine 42, Egleston Square, was overcome and was compelled to relinquish his task. His place was supplied by hoseman Griffin of chemical 5, Egleston Square.

Ladderman Stephen A. Moran of ladder 16, Roslindale, while trying down a line of hose on a ladder on the Walkhill-st side of the hotel, fell and injured his right leg. Hoseman Fall of engine 28 was also slightly overcome.

After two hours the firemen won.

Carelessness Probably the Cause.

Ex-Senator Seivern, proprietor of the hotel, was loud in his praise of the work of the firemen and told Dist Chief Mulligan that the men of the department would hear from him later. He also assured all the employes of his hotel, who had lost their belongings in the fire, that he would reimburse them.

Mr Selberlich carried an insurance of \$10,000 on the contents of the hotel. Mr Gougeon, owner of the building, is also well insured, and it is understood that Mr Miller's loss is also covered by insurance.

The south section of the hotel, with entrance at the junction of Hyde Park av and Walkhill st, which contains the bar on the first floor and 20 chambers on the floors above, was but little damaged as Mr Selberlich closed the iron fire doors separating the two sections of the hotel.

It is expected that the hotel will be rebuilt at once.

A lighted match carelessly dropped through a crack in the piazza is believed to have started the fire.