

### **Large Fire in Merchants' Row, Boston, Feb. 18, 1860.**

ON Saturday evening, about 8 o'clock, an extensive fire broke out in the curled hair establishment of Messrs. Manning, Glover & Co., who occupied the third and fourth floors of the four story building between North Market street, Merchants' Row, and North street, and which was formally known as the Franklin House. The lower stories were occupied by clothing stores and boot and shoe dealers, whose damage was principally by water, the fire not extending below the second story. The room where the fire is supposed to have originated was used principally for storing new stock. No fire had been used in this room during the day, or within fifty feet of where it broke out. The store was shut up at six o'clock, and there is no way in which a fire could have caught accidentally. It was probably set by an incendiary, all the circumstances tending to confirm this belief. When first discovered, the fire was issuing from the rear windows of the third and fourth stories. A lad, the son of the proprietor of the Franklin House, on North street, first saw it, and instantly gave the alarm.

The firemen were promptly on hand, and in a very short time some fifteen or twenty streams were playing into the part of the building where the fire originated. But the whole upper part of the building was filled with combustible materials, such as feathers, hair, and patent wooden materials used in stuffing mattresses, a large amount of manufactured stock, and the ticking, &c., used in its manufacture, and consequently the flames spread rapidly through the middle portion of both upper stories, and soon burst out at the door. At half-past 11 o'clock the flames were so much subdued that many of the engines left the scene. At that time the principal injury to the building was between the two upper stories, and near the central portion of the building. Several engines remained on the ground to put water upon some of the stock that still burned in a smothered condition.

At 3 o'clock on Sunday morning, a second alarm was given, caused by the falling of about one-third of the wall facing Merchants' Row, causing the death of two persons, Capt. Chas. E. Dutton, of Washington Hose Co. No. 1, and Chas. Carter, of Warren Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1. Washington Hose Company was putting water on this portion of the building at the time, and Capt. Green, George Harper, (engineer) Frank B. Leach, George Delano, and Wm. H. Prescott, members of the company, were upon the fourth story. Captain Green requested a pole to punch the fire with, when Carter, a rake-man of H. & L. 1, in the story below, handed up his rake, asking if that would do. Green took the rake and went up to the top of the building with Harper. Just then it was mentioned by one of those on the fourth floor, that there was danger of the floor falling in, as the wooden support had all burnt out. Hardly had this remark been made,

when the floor, settling in the centre, crowded the wall out, and the whole went down with a crash. Carter, it appears, as well as Dunton, were both hit by a beam and knocked under amid the timbers, bricks and rubbish as it fell.

The excitement was great at this time. Fifty commenced overhauling the mass, and in ten or fifteen minutes recovered one body, and shortly after the other. Both were horribly mangled. Their skulls were broken, and their countenances dreadfully disfigured. Charles Carter, whose body was first found, was about 40 years old, and leaves a wife and three children. He has belonged to the department since a boy, and has been foreman of engine companies 13 and 6. He has also been the recipient of numerous gifts, for courage displayed while in the performance of his duty. His premature death was much lamented by his many friends and brother firemen. His body was taken to the engine house. Capt. Charles E. Dunton, the other man killed, was about 35 years old, and also leaves a wife and three children. He formerly belonged to Engine Co. No. 10, and has belonged to Hose Co. No. 1, for the last eight years. His body was taken to the dead house.

Three others, Frank B. Leach, George Delano, and Wm. Prescott, were severely bruised and cut. They had but an indistinct recollection of making sundry evolutions in the air in company with the falling mass, and picking themselves up rather hurriedly, they being fortunate enough to come down upon, rather than under the wall. Messrs. Green and Harper being both on the roof, received no material injury. It was a most remarkable escape.

The wall broke off on the second story, and all beneath remained firm, thus preserving the stock of those occupying the first floor from general ruin with the above.

The building was owned by the heirs of the late Samuel Hammond, and the damage was about \$10,000, which is fully covered by insurance. It is rented for about \$15,000. Samuel H. Russell and John G. Palfrey are the Trustees.

Messrs. Manning, Grover & Co. had a stock, including the raw material and that which had been manufactured, valued at over \$40,000; considerable of this was taken out, but all in a somewhat damaged condition. The loss to this firm is about \$25,000, fully covered by insurance, as follows: \$15,000 in the Royal Insurance Company; \$7000 in the National Insurance Company, both of Boston; \$2000 in the Quincy, and \$1000 in the Weymouth Insurance Companies. They employed about forty persons in this establishment.

Wm. W. Ayers, 47 and 48 North Market street, dealer in boots and shoes, was damaged by water to the extent of \$1000. Insured for \$2500 in the Charlestown Mutual Insurance office.

Richards & Lincoln, 44, Hiram Colbern, 40, and Elijah D. Eldridge, 46 Merchants' Row, all dealers in boots and shoes, were damaged about \$500 each. A German Barber named Schush occupied the second story over Ayers' store, corner of Merchants' Row and North Market street,

and was damaged about \$100. Messrs. Pope & Banefield, 51 North Market street, dealers in hats, caps and furnishing goods, sustained a small loss by water. They were insured for \$2000 in the Shoe and Leather Insurance office. William S. Fretch, 50 North Market street, dealer in cigars and tobacco, damaged about \$2000 which is fully covered by insurance at the Eagle office. L. Morse, 23 and 25 North street, dealer in ready made clothing, was considerably damaged by water; covered by an insurance of \$2500 by Reed & Hastings, agents in the old State house.

Besides the above there was considerable damage sustained by the occupants of the basements. Call and Curtis, 51, Joseph Boynton, 50, and Sartwell & Humphrey, 18 North Market street, dealers in country produce, &c., were each damaged from \$500 to \$1000 by water. The latter firm had a considerable lot of beans, that, being swollen by water, burst the barrels and covered the floor. Neither of the firms were insured. On Merchants' Row, Messrs. Tyron & Niles, pork packers, Dyer & Frost, dealers in hides, and George Bemis, pork packer, were damaged about \$500 each. Dyer & Frost were insured. The flames also extended into the store of Messrs. Breck & Son, agriculturalists, but there was not much damage done.

The funeral of Capt. Charles E. Dunton, of Washington Hose Co. No. 1, and Charles Carter, of Warren Hook & Ladder Co. No. 1, who were killed by the falling of the wall at the above fire in Merchants' Row, took place on the afternoon of Tuesday, the 21st of Feb. 1860, from the M. E. Church, on Hanover street. The deceased members were favorites with their own companies as well as with all who personally knew them, and, as is customary on the occasion of the funeral of a member of the Department, there was a very large turn out. Long before 2 o'clock, the crowd began to collect in front of the church, and at half-past 2 o'clock there were thousands congregated, filling the street completely full for nearly fifty yards on either side of the church. There was a squad of policemen in attendance, but such was the crowd that it was almost impossible to advance or recede from the doors of the church.

The remains arrived at the church about 2 o'clock. The bodies of both the deceased were enclosed in black walnut coffins. On them was placed wreaths, boquets, firemen's hats, and that of Capt. Dunton, his trumpet, which was won by him in a half mile foot race, several years previous. The mourners consisted of the widows of each of the deceased, and their children, and the near relatives residing in Boston. The body of the house was filled with members of the fire department of this city, and from Roxbury and Charlestown. The services were conducted by Revs. Mr. Ives, Father Taylor, D. C. Eddy, J. W. Dadman, Phineas Stow, and Rev. Father Streeter were present, seated inside the altar, near the coffins. The services were opened by Rev. Mr. Ives, by reading a hymn, which was sung by the choir, after which prayer was offered by Father Taylor. He very earnestly prayed God

to comfort, guide and support the widows and children of the deceased, and that all friends and members of the fire department may be warned by this sad event of the uncertainty of life.

At the close of the prayer, Rev. D. C. Eddy addressed the mourners and the congregation. He spoke of the cause of so large a congregation of mourners; it was nothing new to part with a friend. The trying scenes of the death-bed were every day occurrences, and death is what we have all got to prepare for. Two of your number were but a few evenings since called from their homes to do their duty; they left, perhaps, with the promise to return soon; hours passed away, and they came not, and finally the solemn and almost heart-rending news came to their families of their bereavement. This is what has called us together.

At the close of Mr. Eddy's remarks, which were very touching, the procession formed in front of the church, and marched in the following order: Red Jacket Hose Company of Charlestown; Warren 1 of Roxbury; Spinney No. 14; Webster No. 13; Tremont No. 12; Maverick No. 9; Boston, steamer 8; Suffolk Hose Company No. 6; Deluge Hose Co. No. 5; Chester Hose No. 4; Hook and Ladder 2; Franklin Hose No. 3; Dispatch No. 2; Lawrence steamer No. 7; Eclipse No. 6; Extinguisher Engine Co. No. 5; Cataract No. 4; Eagle, steam No. 3; Antelope, steam No. 1; Massachusetts Hook and Ladder Company; Board of Engineers.

These companies formed the escort, and numbered about 400 in all. After them came the hearse, with the following pall bearers; W. R. Robbins of Engine No. 12; Charles Barnes, No. 6; J. E. Clark, Hook and Ladder No. 2; B. King, Hose No. 2; C. C. Wilson of No. 6 steamer; E. W. Murray, Warren No. 1, Roxbury; E. C. Thompson, steamer No. 7; M. W. Rice, Red Jacket Hose, Charlestown; M. A. Jones, steamer No. 1; W. Wallingford, Engine No. 5; George E. Towne, Hose No. 4; W. F. Huges, Hose No. 2; Geo. D. Potter, Engine No. 14; J. C. Jameson, Engine No. 13; James Cowell, Hose No. 3; J. A. Young, Hose No. 5; T. H. Pitman, Hook and Ladder No. 2.

Following the hearse were the members of the two companies to which the deceased belonged, numbering in all about 100 men. There were also fourteen coaches with the near relatives and friends of the deceased. The hearse contained the remains of Mr. Carter, which was followed by the procession, part of the way, to Forest Hill, where they were interred. The remains of Captain Duncan were taken to the residence of his friends in Wincasset, Maine, where they were buried. All the companies of the Boston Fire Department were fully represented, except Barnicoat No. 11, one of whose members having died with the small pox, was being buried the same afternoon by the company.

At the time the procession commenced forming, the bells were tolled by means of the alarm telegraph. At the first stroke of the bells, it sounded so much like an alarm, that many of the members almost with an intuition, started out of the ranks.