

FIVE ALARMS, LOSS \$200,000.

Bigelow & Dowse Co's Place on Franklin St Destroyed---Many Explosions.



LOOKING FROM THE CORNER OF PEARL AND FRANKLIN STS WHEN THE FIRE WAS AT ITS HIGHT.

A most picturesque, savage and enduring fire last night cleaned out completely the building at 215-217 Franklin st, occupied by the Bigelow & Dowse company, dealers in hardware, guns, ammunition, furnaces, machines, agricultural implements and bicycles.

The fire started just after 9 o'clock, while a number of the firm's employes were at work in the building. It spread with great rapidity, and some of the men had to run for safety.

A first alarm was turned in from box 16, at the corner of Milk and Oliver sts, and immediately upon the arrival of the apparatus, at 9:19, a third alarm was ordered by Chief Cheswell. A fourth alarm was given at 9:40 and a fifth at 9:55. This brought 42 steamers to the fire, with their accompanying hose carts and all the ladders and bigger apparatus of the city proper.

The effect of a fifth alarm was to put on duty every man in the city police department, from the commissioners down to the latest probationers. The men did not all go to the fire, of course, but reported at their stations, and were kept there until midnight, when the day men and others off duty were released and sent home.

Smoke had been smelled since 6:30 in the Bigelow & Dowse place, and the men had been hunting for it. Suddenly and without any warning the flames appeared in the second story, in the southwest corner, where the firm gets out its circular printing. The fire spread so fast that the men did not even have time to get a lot of ammunition, pistol and shotgun cartridges which were on this floor.

The fire was a hard one to fight for the reason that it occupied the whole building inside of 10 minutes after it started and was not by any means to be driven inward. Eight slamed streams were massed directly in front of the building by the water tower, and all this volume of water was kept on the windows of one story at a time. As fast as the fire was smothered in clouds of steam in one story it broke out again above and below.

Word was passed that ammunition was stored on the second story, and presently the first of this began to pop and the police cleared the street, driving out even the reporters, insurance men and notification men.

The fire worked upward and soon a burst above and the rattle of falling glass told of a hot air explosion, the first of many.

The firemen surrounded the fire completely with streams of water, but up to midnight had not been able to enter the building. The streets turned to rivers; an astonishing amount of water was pumped into the flames, but they raged merrily on, gobbled the roof and towered hundreds of feet into the air.

The shift of watches in the telephone offices and the closing of the theatres each sent a bunch of beauty to hop round the river, stumble over the hose and choke amid the falling cinders.

They could only wonder about the fire, for the police had cleared the block, and they could not see round the corners.

There were something more than 100 policemen on hand, under Lieut Frohock of division 2. Divisions 1, 3, 4 and 5 each sent a sergeant with five men.

From the front, there seemed to be little danger of falling walls. At the back, this looked more threatening, and at one time the little streets were cleared of everybody except the firemen on the lines. Hose carriages were moved out of Hartford st, and when at 11:50 the top floor fell in with a big bang, the crowd thought the time had come for a general comedown. Everybody scampered, even the firemen running in obedience to the crash and the general cry of warning, but the wall stood.

By this time nothing was to be seen of flames from the street, but the all-out signal was not rung until many hours later.

About 11 o'clock engine 6, which had been stationed in Wendell st, gave out and had to retire. This left for a time only one live line of hose, that of engine 22, on this side of the fire. Another line was brought round, and used from the fire escape opposite. District Chief Ryan was in charge of this side of the fire. Chief Cheswell taking charge in front.

When the first engine arrived, the flames were spouting half way across the street. The chief disposed his force in front of the building at first, and as more apparatus came, used the roof at

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the corner of Franklin and Pearl and Wendell sts.

The store occupies the center of a small block, in a keystone shape. On Franklin st, east of it, there is the repair shop of the telephone company, into the top of which the fire got. At the corner of Oliver st is Peter F. Tague's steel business. The damage to these two places was mainly from smoke and water, the cellars being flooded full.

At the rear, in the jog of the keystone, is Senator John Quinn's house. The Bigelow and Dowse building was numbered 20-25 Wendell st, and the Quinn house 30. The latter was occupied by Daniel McGillicuddy, his wife and seven children, on the first and second floors, and John Lannan, his wife, three daughters and two children, the offspring of one of the daughters, Mrs Ryder. In the basement was the office of Fifield & Co, teamsters.

William McGillicuddy, one of the sons, was at the theatre, and knew nothing of the fire until he ran into the crowd near his home. He begged his way through the lines until he found his family.

The next building, numbered 36-33 Wendell st, is owned by Thomas C. Sutton as trustee, and occupied on the ground floor by him as a barroom, and on the second and third floors as a dwelling. On the top floor lived Patrick Bresnahan. Mr Sutton was sick in bed with rheumatism, and was removed by patrolmen Kennedy of division 2 and Kennedy of division 1 to John Morrison's house in Wharf st.

At first none of the families wanted to leave these houses. The fire was hardly visible in the big building, and was confined on that side to the second floor. Suddenly, however, the third, fourth and fifth floors lit up, all within half a minute. The people came out in a hurry then. They had time, however, to save most of their personal effects, and as the event proved, the houses were not burned at all.

Capt Kennedy of engine 25 was slightly cut on the face and hands by flying glass at the first of the explosions, but pluckily went on with his work. A falling hose coupling hit hoseman Mitchell of engine 22, but he, too, was able to continue work.

The Bigelow & Dowse building was owned by Horace B. Taylor. The building is said to be worth \$100,000. The stock carried by Bigelow & Dowse was worth not less than \$100,000. Building and stock were insured.

LUMBER SHEDS DESTROYED.

Fire in Bradford District, Haverhill,
Subdued After Fierce Fight of
Firemen.

HAVERHILL, Jan 27—Two alarms were sounded shortly after 9 this evening for a fire in the lumber yard of the Taylor-Goodwin company on the Bradford side of the river.

The fire started in the office building of the plant on Main st, but before the apparatus had arrived at the scene the flames had jumped to a long lumber shed in the rear, filled with kiln-dried lumber, and had enveloped it. Just across a roadway was another set of buildings, including a stable, in which were 30 horses, and just below were the big coal sheds of the concern. Showers of sparks fell on these buildings, but they were saved. Only the front building and the kiln-dried shed and contents were destroyed, together with a freight car standing on a siding and a number of wagons in the yards.

The buildings are at the Bradford end of the Haverhill bridge, and for a time it was thought that this bridge, the only connection for teams between Haverhill proper and Bradford, would catch from the sparks.

Treas George M. Goodwin of the company estimates the loss on his stock at about \$25,000 and on the buildings at \$3000 more, which is covered by insurance.

The fire started in the northerly end of the front building, a considerable distance from the heating apparatus of the building, and no cause other than the act of an incendiary can be ascribed.

BURNS PROVE FATAL.

Death of Helen Bacon, Aged 8, of
East Lexington.

LEXINGTON, Jan 27—Helen Bacon, 8 years old, of Sylvia st, East Lexington, died at 8 o'clock this morning of burns received last night from the overturning of a lamp.

She was the daughter of Bert F. Ba-

con. who runs a blacksmith shop at 508 Rutherford av, Charlestown.

Shortly after 8 last night Mrs Bacon went upstairs with her children—Helen, Eva, 5, and Roy, 2. The children were put to bed, and Mrs Bacon was preparing to leave the room, when one of the younger children suddenly stood up in bed and in some way knocked over the lamp.

The younger children fortunately escaped injury, but both Mr and Mrs Bacon were severely burned in attempting to rescue their daughter.

The upper part of the house was badly gutted and water damaged the lower story considerably. After two hours' hard work the fire was extinguished. The loss is covered by insurance.

Fire in East Boston Coal Pocket.

Shortly after 6 o'clock last night fire was discovered in the large coal pocket at York's wharf, Border st, East Boston. Engine 9 was summoned and for over three hours the firemen worked trying to extinguish the flames. It is impossible to estimate the damage.

Damage of \$2500 Caused.

The alarm from box 125 at 3:15 yesterday afternoon was for a fire in the one-story wooden building, in the rear of 383 Dorchester av, South Boston, owned by Gordon Dexter and occupied by the Hunt-Spiller manufacturing company. The cause of the fire was the overturning of a pot of hot metal. Damage \$2500.