CHURCH BURNEI

One of the Oldest in the City of Boston.

Historic Edifice on Meeting House Hill in Dorchester.

Four Firemen Injured at Duty's Post.

Defective Furnace Flue Was Probable Cause.

Destruction of a Gloucester Icehouse.

The old First church of Dorchester was destroyed by fire early yesterday morning, and four firemen were hurt in trying to save the historic edifice. The building belonged to the First (Unitarian) parish of Boston, the oldest church organization in the city, and was itself the oldest church edifice in Dorchester. The men hurt were Capt Blanchard of engine 20, Lieut Riddler



AFTER THE SPIRE OF THE CHURCH FELL

of the combination wagon 1. Joe Hoyt of engine 20, and John Gavin of ladder 4. who were thrown from ladders and

struck by falling timbers.

It is believed that a defective furnace flue was the cause of the fire, which was not discovered until 6.50, when fireman Fruen of ladder 7 and inspector Neal of the West End road saw the smoke and flames bursting through the roof. Ladder 7 is connected with engine 17, which is very near the church -right across the street, in fact. Box 915 was at once pulled in, and the men of engines 17, 18 and 21 and ladder 7 soon found that the old church was in a bad way, and a second alarm was pulled in about 7 o'clock.

It was not long after the second alarm when District Chief Gaylord arrived, and he ordered a third alarm at once. The apparatus then present was en-gines 16, 20 and 24 and ladder 6, and en-gines 12, 19 and 43 and ladder 4.

At first it seems rather strange that the fire should get such headway while the house of engine 17 was only about 100 feet away and a man on duty all the time. But this is accounted for by

the fact that the church was tightly closed in every part, and the fire, which started in the front vestibule, had filled the entire inside of the building, and gained a tremendous headway before the slightest outward sign was shown.

The moment that the first opening

gained a tremendous headway before the slightest outward sign was shown. The moment that the first opening was made great volumes of smoke poured out, as if the blaze had been gaining for a half-hour. The fire seemed to have burned its way through the floor of the vestibule, completely destroying that part of the church, and to have gone a long way toward destroying the whole front of the inside of the church before there was enough smoke escaping to indicate to any one that the church was afire at all.

The firemen said it was a pretty hot nest they got into, when they made the first break. The flames at once shot out through the front of the church over the door, and then climbed around the base of the steeple, and out through the roof just back of the steeple.

In 10 minutes after the alarm sounded, or about 7 o'clock, things were beginning to be pretty lively, but the old clock on the steeple kept right on with its duty and struck the hour of 7. It was the last time it had a chance to strike, for just a few minutes before 8 the steeple fell.

First assistant chief Regan of Boston arrived about 7.30, and he practically had control of the fire. By that time the church was blazing fiercely from front to rear, and some of the timbers were beginning to fall. It was about this time that four of the firemen were quite painfully hurt.

A number of the men were stationed near the eastern coping, where the fire was pretty hot, and when the coping fell it struck the ladders on which they were at work.

All the men hurt were taken to their homes in the vicinity and physicians summoned. Capt Blanchard was quite back was hurt a little. oe Hoyt had his wrist broken, and his leg was badly bruised about the face, and his back has here to here three furnaces in the church, two in the rear, near the vestibule and organ. So far as anyone can tell, the fire started from an over-heated five of the furnace in the front end of the church, under the vestibule and organ. So far as anyone can tell, the fire started from an over-heate

It didn't take very long for the parishioners and the pastor, Rev E. R. Shippen, to arrive on the scene, and they pen, to arrive on the scene, and they pen, to arrive on the scene, and they did all they could to help the firemen. Judge Churchill of the municipal court and Walter Fox, both members of the church, who arrived quite early, made quite a heroic rescue. They managed to save the old clock on the inside of the church, which was presented to the congregation years ago by Gov Gardner. The judge supported a ladder and Walter Fox chopped out the clock. He barely got it, for the fire was so hot then he couldn't have remained at the place a half minute longer.

The records of this old church were deposited in a copper ball at the top of the steeple, directly under the weather vane, instead of in the corner stone. These records will be saved, for the firemen kept the fire from going up the steeple, so that it burned off at the base and fell into the church. It was noticed afterward that the top of the steeple and the copper ball containing the records were all right.

The vestry was not damaged by fire at all, and the damage to it by water will not amount to a great deal. Both

will not amount to a great deal. Both the planes and all the chairs and bench-es of the vestry were saved, and many of the cushioned seats in the rear of the church were saved before the fire got too hot for the men to go inside.

Mr Miller, the sexton, was particularly careful about the furnaces when he left the church at 1.30 p m Sunday. He even took pains to look all around the flues and furnaces to see that everything was in good condition. The furnaces are very old ones, but no one attaches blame to Mr Miller.

It seems that the church has been affre twice before, but in a very slight way. The house being situated on the hill it was a little difficult to get enough water pressure at the fire yesterday, especially when the men were trying to put out the fire in the steeple.

The church was surrounded on all sides by schoolhouses. Across the way on East st is the Lyceum hall school, a wooden structure, and for some time it was protected yesterday, as the sparks were flying that way. No portion of the building caught, however, The other buildings about the church are the old Mather school, the newl Mather school and a small primary school building.

The "all out" slarm was sounded at

The "all out" slarm was sounded at 12.40 p m. All the walls are left standing, and the galleries do not appear to be burned very much.

LIST OF INSURANCE.

Aggregate \$35,000, on Building, Organ, Carpets, Clocks and Upholstery.

The correct and complete list of insurance on the First parish church, Dorchester, destroyed by fire yesterday, is as follows. It covers specifically the building, organ, carpets, clocks and up-holstery. It aggregates \$35,000.

ON CHURCH AND VESTRY

Springfield fire and marine company	\$2,500
Liverpool, London and Globe	2,100
Norfolk mutual of Dedham	1,000
Dedham mutual of Dedham	1,000
Dorchester mutual company	3,000
Pacific Insurance company of New York .	2,000
Providence Washington of Rhode Island.	3,000
National insurance company of Hartford	8,000
London assurance corporation	2,700
Phenix of London	4,500
Scottish Union and National	2,000

Total\$20,850

ON ORGAN
Springfield fire and maxino
Pacific insurence company of New York.
Providence Washington of Rhode Island.
National of Hartford
London assurance corporation
Phenix of London
Scottish Union and National 500 1,000 1,000 Total \$4,200 ON TWO CLOCKS \$500 50 Total . On upholstery and carpets, Boylston of Boston On plane, Liverpool, London and Globe...

ON ORGAN