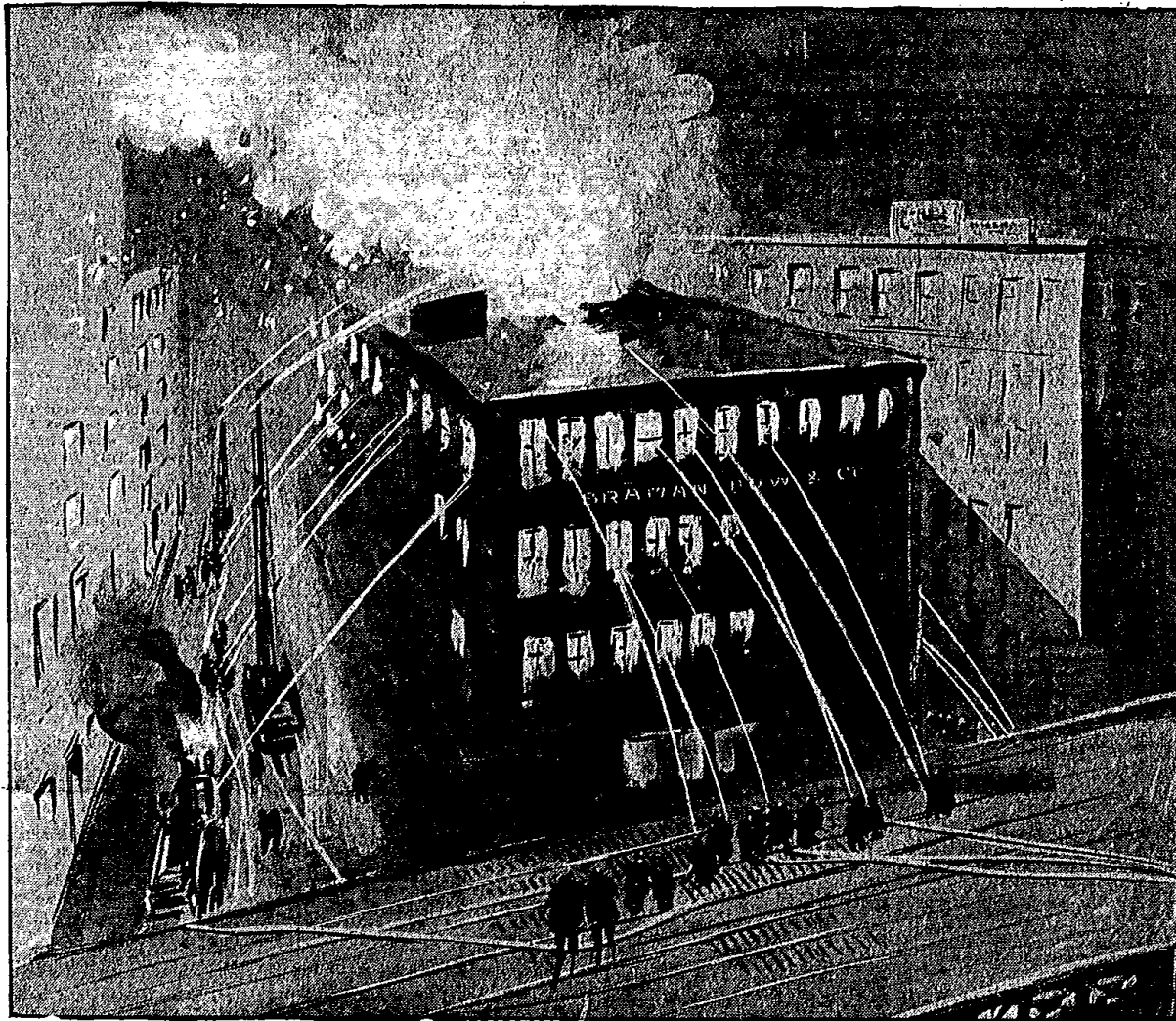


GREAT BURST OF FLAME MENACES MANY BUILDINGS

Braman, Dow & Co's Plant Destroyed--Elevated Train
Scorched and Line Tied Up Three Hours.



SCENE OF THE FIRE FROM THE TOP OF A BUILDING ON CAUSEWAY ST, SHOWING FIREMEN DIRECTING STREAMS FROM THE ELEVATED STRUCTURE.

Forty Streams From Five Alarms Flood Shop in Causeway St---Loss Is \$250,000---Five Firemen Injured in Hard Fight.

Boston's Fire Department had its hardest fight in months last night in the fire that gutted the big warehouse of Braman, Dow & Co at the corner of Causeway and Medford sts, in the lower part of the city.

The fire damage will probably not exceed \$250,000, being confined to the one building, but to limit it to that required five alarms, bringing

no less than 19 engines and three fireboats, and the flooding of the building for more than three hours with great quantities of water.

This made the fire the biggest in point of apparatus, if not the hardest, since the Albany-st fire of nearly three years ago.

No serious injuries resulted to the firemen, though one ladderman sprained his ankle in a fall and Lieut Thomas H. Hines of Engine 6 and three men were overcome by smoke. All five were taken to the Relief Station.

Forty Streams Required.

More than an hour and a quarter after the first alarm was sounded the flames, bursting through the roof, so seriously threatened the buildings across Medford st that the fifth alarm was ordered by Chief Mullen, and for a time the firemen were obliged to turn a large part of their efforts to shielding those other buildings with a curtain of water.

It was not until nearly 10 o'clock, when the fire had been raging for three hours, that it was really got under control. Though water was poured into the building from all

sides by fully 40 lines, time and again the flames would break out on every floor from top to bottom.

Opposite the Causeway-st side of the building is the Elevated structure, and from 7:15 to 10:16 no trains were run past it, thus causing the suspension of service in the Washington-st Tunnel for the longest time in its history.

Oil and Oakum Feed Flames.

The building is a five-story brick structure, about 160 feet long and 85 feet deep, covering 13,245 square feet. It is owned by the James P. Thorndike estate, C. B. Wheelock and others, trustees, and its assessed valuation was \$4,000.

The Braman, Dow Company, otherwise called the Boston Steam & Gas Pipe Works, is composed of Henry A. Barrett, Harry W. Barrett and Frank M. Sheldon, who is general manager. They would not estimate the value of their stock on hand, but they carried insurance of \$300,000.

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BURST OF FLAME MENACES BUILDINGS

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The stock consisted largely of iron, steam and gas pipe, brass and iron fittings of all kinds, plumbing supplies and the like. There was a good deal of oakum and white lead in the building, and the woodwork was generally saturated with the oil used in connection with the machine work. To this is attributed the rapid spread of the fire and the great difficulty which the firemen had in meeting it.

The fire apparently started in the cutting room on the first floor. About 9 o'clock the last of the employees, who number some 70 in all, had left the building. At 8:50 Harold J. LeKowitch of 11 Kingdon st, the young son of the proprietor of a little tobacco store at 237 Causeway st, in the shadow of the big warehouse building, saw flames on the first and second floors.

Elevated Train in Danger.

He ran to the fire alarm box at the corner of Causeway and Haverhill sts and met Joseph A. Verkampen, who sounded the alarm.

That was at 8:52. Five minutes later Dist Chief Tabor, who with Dist Chief Fox had responded to the first alarm, sounded the second, and in another minute came the third. Chief Tabor also called up the Boston Elevated and notified them to cut out the service on the elevated structure on Causeway st.

At that time the fire had mounted high up through the building, and great sheets of flame were belching out into Causeway st. There an elevated train was standing, waiting for the signal to take the switch to the track to Charlestown, and the flames, coming so near as almost to scorch the paint, terrified the passengers and rendered some of the women almost hysterical.

Not until 7:30 was the fourth alarm given. In the meantime the firemen had been pouring water in from lines of hose on Causeway and Medford sts and from two water towers on the latter street. They had also taken hose up to the elevated structure and by long ropes had raised lines of hose to the roof of the tall Keaney-sq Building across Medford st.

Flame Nearly Crosses Street.

From Beverly-st roofs, from the building at 20 and 24 Medford st and from the roofs of the tall factory buildings across Causeway at they poured water on the flames.

Needed reinforcements came with the arrival of the fireboats—Engine 44 first and then 47 and 31, which tied up near the Warren Bridge, and from which big lines of hose were carried to the fire.

The back of the building and the end on Medford st were protected with 24-inch brick fire walls, and through these there was no danger of the fire spreading.

The firemen were able to drive the flames back from the windows on Causeway and Medford sts, so that there was at first little fear of spreading on those sides either, but the interior of the building was all flame, so that the firemen dared not fight it on the inside but had to be content with flooding it from without.

The greatest danger came when at 8:15 the flames burst through the roof. Until then, though the streets were thick with smoke, there was little flame to be seen, and it appeared almost as if the fire were under control. Then it blazed high. The wind drove the flames half way across narrow Medford st and sparks rained down on the buildings opposite.

This was the sign for occupants of buildings on Beverly st to move. In Joseph Myers' stable there were 30 horses, and these were the first to be disposed of. Policemen and other men entered the stable and ran the frightened animals out.

At one time there was almost a stampede, for three horses, led by a citizen, took fright at the engines and the sparks, and started to bolt. Stable employes, however, came to the rescue, and the horses were led safely outside the fire lines.

Many Buildings Kept Wet Down.

On the other side of the street was the nine-story Keany-sq Building, and next to it the lower building occupied by Thomas Ward, dealer in paper stock. Although both of these buildings are of brick, the Keany-sq Building also having a tar and gravel roof, the firemen covered the fronts of both with water, and only some of the corners were burned. A large ladder truck and some other apparatus was forced out of Medford st by the outburst of flames.

On the other side of the buildings, however, on Beverly st, the buildings were of no such durable construction. Next on Causeway st came a wooden one-story structure, occupied as a tobacco store, and on the corner of Beverly st was another wooden building, also unoccupied.

On Beverly st is the wooden stable of Joseph Myers, and next to it the wooden hay and grain store of the Willey Gibson Company. Next to that come two brick loft buildings, the first occupied by the Triumph Cough Red Company and other concerns, and the second by A. E. Kenney & Co, and other firms.

Although the wind was happily blowing the other way, the firemen kept the roofs of all these buildings, and especially of the wooden buildings, well soaked with water.

Next to the burning building on Medford st is a brick building occupied by G. W. Buckland, the Kensington Engineering Company, the Paris Paper Box Company and the J. O. Chase Confectionery Company. The roof of this was also well wet down, but there was comparatively little danger.

Sparks Fire Roof of Gasometer.

The only fire caused by the sparks was on the roof of the old gasometer on Causeway st, at the foot of Hull st. This was sighted by the commander of the USS Chicago, and he sent his orderly with the information to Chief Mullen. A chemical engine was dispatched to the gasometer and the fire quickly disposed of.

The occupants of the Kearney-sq Building, though for a time in great danger, suffered no fire loss, but did suffer heavily with water. The engine room in the basement, as well as the rooms of the State forester, of H. B. Smith, dealer in radiators, and of Sullivan & Daley, plumbers' supplies, were filled several feet deep with water.

Other concerns on the Medford-st side of that building which lost more or less from water and smoke were the King-Peters Company, electrotypers, on the top floor; the Touraine Confectionery Company on the eighth; Tishnor Bros on the seventh, the Municipal printing plant on the sixth, the New England Raincoat Company—one of the firms of which the employees are now on strike—on the fifth; the Emerson Apparatus Company and other firms on the fourth; the American Water Supply Company on the third and second, and Sullivan & Daley on the first.

Water damage, however, was widespread, for the flood of water poured into the building came out into the street in such quantities that the sewers could not take it away and filled Causeway st above its sidewalks for a block, besides flooding adjacent cellars on Medford and Beverly sts.

Roof and Floors Crash Down.

At 8:45 the roof of the building fell in and from that time on the fire was largely under control, though still so dangerous as to keep all the apparatus occupied. During the next hour one floor fell after another, crashing down heavily with its great weight of iron and brass fixtures.

The press of engines, the dense smoke, the falling glass and the greater danger of falling walls made it necessary to hold the crowds far back, and Causeway st was roped across from the sides of Beverly st and Washington st North farthest from the fire. Medford st, Beverly st and Washington st North were closed between Causeway and Traverse sts, and the operation of the surface cars as well as that of the Elevated was thus impeded.

Fully 100 police officers were employed guarding the fire under command of Bertram Donovan and Michael Ferman of the Engine at Station 10. From that station every available man was summoned, and there were details also from Stations 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 15 and 18.

Gallant Fight in Face of Flames.

In all the fire, the work of one little band stood out conspicuously. Blinded and choked by thick, black smoke, scorched by the heat, up to the waist in water and with water pouring down on them, a score of firemen commanded by Dist Chief Fox worked during the whole time at the Causeway-st doorway of the blazing building.

Time and again they were driven from their positions by sudden shoots of flame, but they returned to their post undaunted. Coughing, choking, staggering, they would tumble out into the street—or be dragged there—get a good breath and rush back into the smoke again.

Most of the time they were hidden from sight. They worked in darkness almost entirely.

Now and then machinery or a whole floor fell, threatening to bury them.

Several times members of the band, consisting of men from Engine 6 and Engine 36, were dragged unconscious to the street by their comrades. And as quickly as they could recover their senses they returned to the smoke-filled doorway to fight their way into the building.

Lieut Hines Falls Unconscious.

Lieut Thomas H. Hines of Engine 6 was the first to be overcome by the smoke. He stuck to his post until he fell over senseless. The men who had been working behind him in the darkness felt him fall and gave the alarm. The others rushed to his aid and he was carried to the street and put into an ambulance.

Just as the ambulance was about to speed away to the Relief Hospital, it was stopped by another cry from the doorway and Hoseman Pellegrino Mullo of Engine 6 was carried out. Both were taken to the Relief Station.

While the men of Engines 4, 6, 10, 28 and 36 were struggling to stop the fire's headway from the Causeway-st side of the burning building, Water Tower 1 was got ready for action on the Medford-st side by William Nolan and John Williams. Dan O'Brien's command, Water Tower 3, was also brought into Medford st, and later on, when the flames were shooting from the roof, the two water towers' high pressure guns, connected by lines of hose with the fireboats, did excellent work.

Chief Mullen established his headquarters on the Causeway-st side of the building, while the various district chiefs, all of whom were on hand, were stationed in various quarters.

While the laddermen raised ladders to the roofs of the smaller buildings on Beverly st and to upper windows of the higher ones, the gun of Engine 6's hose wagon was connected up and sent a high pressure stream over to the roof of the burning building.

Work in Black Pall of Smoke.

Early in the fire several lines of hose were connected up from the special fire-fighting plant of the Loose Wiles Biscuit Company, across Causeway st. A couple of these lines were run diagonally across the street and coupled to the water towers, while the others were run straight across the street, beneath the elevated structure to the Kearney-sq Building. The hose lines were hoisted up the front of this building to the roof, from which they were played on the burning building, directly across Medford st.

In this manner, with streams from Causeway st, from Medford st and from Beverly st playing on the blazing structure, the fire was fought from every possible side.

The firemen were hampered a great deal by smoke, which filled the whole neighborhood to such an extent that it was impossible to see an inch before one's face at times. This was overcome in part by the use of flaming torches, which, however, only served to light up a restricted space.

Medford st in particular was untenable because of smoke. In this narrow black pit the conditions under which the firemen worked when the flames broke through that side of the building were terrifying. The flames darting almost across the street, a tangle of hose lines and water more than ankle deep under foot, except where the red-tongued flames shot back and forth and where the high pressure guns or the towers' streams broke through it, an inky, choking, suffocating blackness; dim forms darting here and there, and a babel of shouts and orders.

There was, Chief Mullen said, danger that the Medford-st side of the building might collapse any minute.

Ladderman Burke of Ladder 18, who was fighting with the men of his company on this side of the building, was knocked down, falling from the first story to the street. Fortunately he escaped with a sprained ankle. Hoseman Thomas H. Keough of Engine 37 was taken from this side of the building unconscious. With George Kewen of Engine 8, who was overcome while on the front of the building, these two men were taken to the Relief Hospital.

The office of the firm, situated on the first floor at the corner of Causeway and Medford sts, was the portion of that floor least touched by the fire, and it is thought by members of the firm that the contents of the safe, the books and other valuable records, are not destroyed or irreparably damaged.