

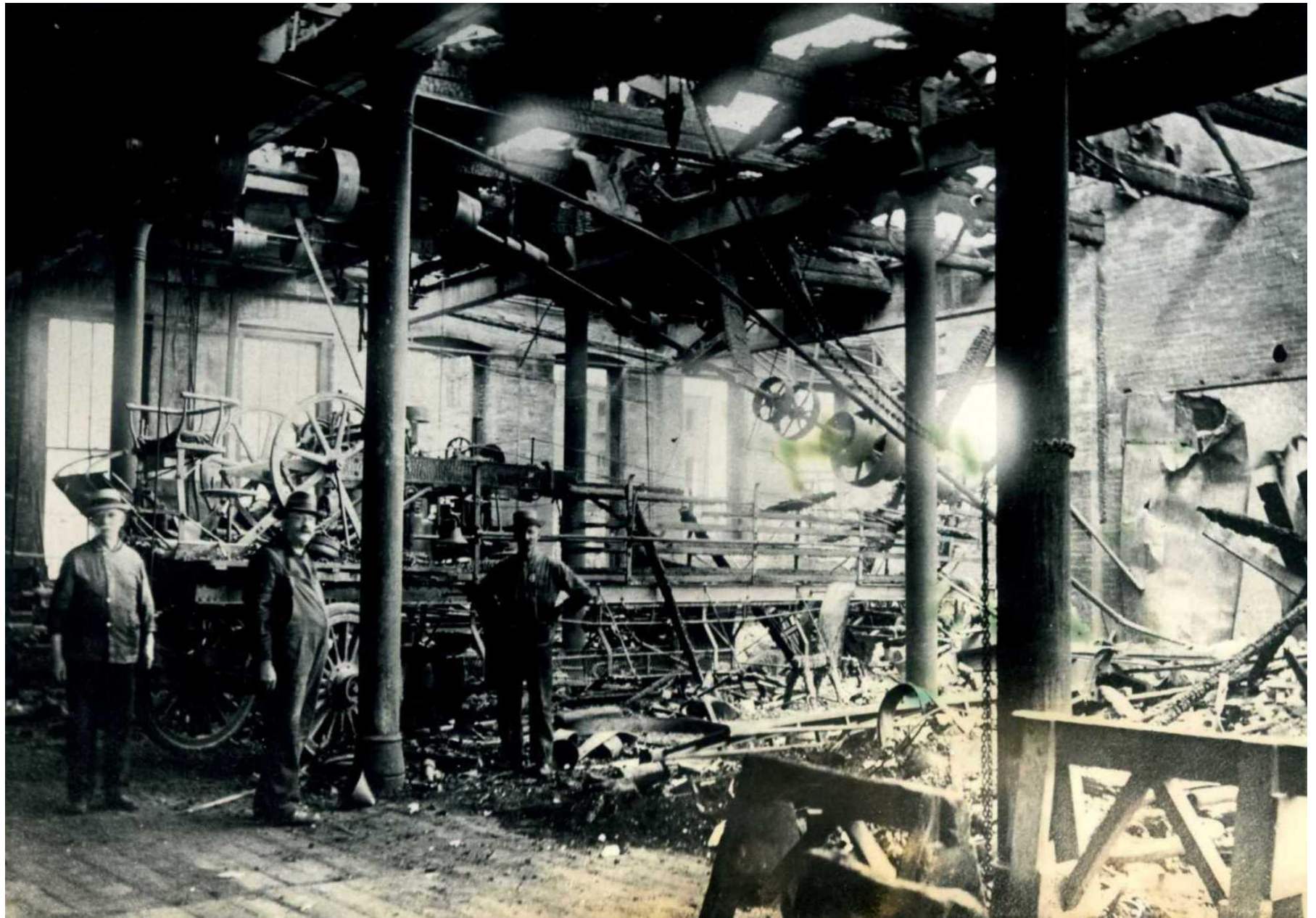
Blacker & Shepard Lumber Yard Fire, August 9, 1910  
350 Albany Street, South End, including buildings on Albany, Dover, Bristol & Thayer Streets  
6 Alarms, Box 58, 1817 Hours.











# EPITOME OF ALBANY-ST FIRE.

Twenty buildings destroyed or damaged.

Estimated loss about \$500,000.

Fire started probably in drying room of Blacker & Shepard lumber company.

Cause, probably spontaneous combustion.

First alarm from box 58 at 6:17 p m.

Sixth, or general alarm, at 6:30.

First general alarm in Boston in 14 years.

Fire considered under control at 10 p m.

Assistance rendered by all cities and towns in Metropolitan district.

Sixty pieces of Boston apparatus employed.

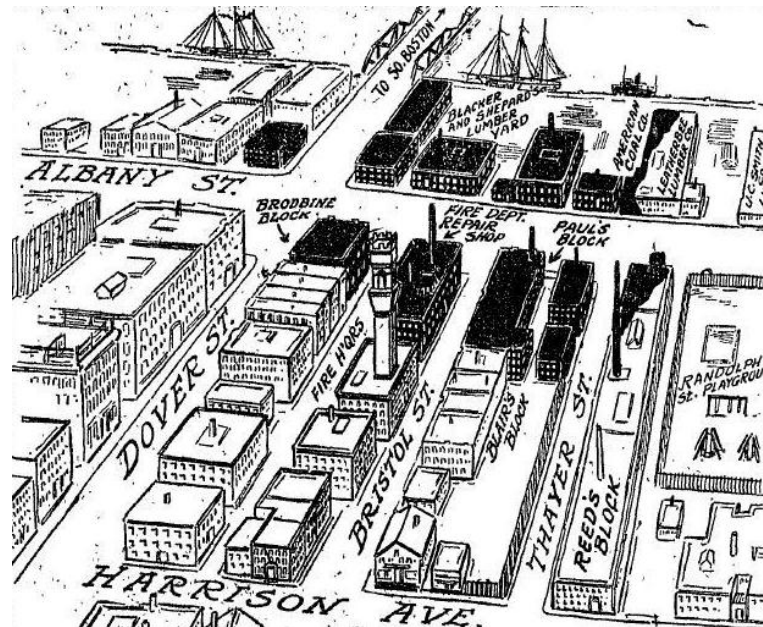
About 400 feet of wharf frontage burned.

About three acres burned over.

Seven families made homeless.

Twelve firemen injured or overcome by smoke.

Eight other alarms, including five for one fire, sounded during progress of Albany-st fire.







*Fire Department.*  
*Fire Alarm Branch.*  
*Office of Superintendent.*  
*Bristol Street.*

*Boston,* August 10, <sup>1910</sup>~~1911~~

LIST OF CITIES AND TOWNS NOTIFIED BY "MAIN"  
CHIEF OPERATOR AND THE APPARATUS THEY  
SENT.

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| ARLINGTON  | Hose 2 to Box 44  |
| BROOKLINE  | Eng. 2 and Combination A (Auto) to Box 58 (Thayer St.)<br>Brookline covered first alarms from own quarters as far<br>as Roxbury Crossing. |
| CAMBRIDGE  | Eng. 3 to Box 58 (Repair Shop Yard)<br>Eng. 7 to Box 58 (Bristol Street)  |
| CHELSEA    | Engines 1 and 5 to Box 58 - Eng. 2 responded to Box 632   |
| EVERETT    | Engine 1 and Hose 1 to Box 44.  |
| HYDE PARK  | Hose 1 to Cover Engine 3 - thence to Box 44.  |
| LYNN       | Engine 3 and Hose 3 to Box 44.  |
| MEDFORD    | Eng. 1 and Hose 1 covered in Eng. 11 House.<br>Eng. 1 and Hose 1 reported at Box 58 but did not work.<br>Thence to Box 44                 |
| MELROSE    | Eng. 1 and Hose 1 to Box 44   |
| MILTON     | Eng. 1 and Hose 1 to Box 58.<br>Lad. 1 to Lad. 6<br>Combination 1 and Hose 3 responded to Box 975   |
| NEWTON     | Eng. 1; Hose & Chemical 1 to Box 58 (Albany & Dover Sts.)<br>Thence to Box 44.  |
| QUINCY     | Eng. 1; Hose & Combination 1 to Boxes 58 and 44.  |
| REVERE     | Covered Chelsea on First Alarms.  |
| SOMERVILLE | Eng. 1 to Box 58 (Harrison Ave. near Randolph St.)  |
| WALTHAM    | Eng. 1 and Hose 1 to Box 44   |
| WINTHROP   | Eng. 1 and Hose 1 covered in Engine 9 House   |
| DEDHAM     | State did not receive call for help.  |
| MALDEN     |   |

*Watertown*  
This information was obtained by telephoning the above  
cities and towns.

*Brookline reports they had made ready but  
were not called on. The order to the main chief operator  
was given at 7.15 P.M.*  
*Richard Doyahue*  
*Chief Operator*

The following is a copy of a report made August 15, 1910 by Chief Operator Donahue and Supt. of Fire Alarm Flanders covering the activities of the Boston Fire Alarm Office during the evening of August 9, 1910 when the Blacker & Shepard Lumber Yard Fire and the High Street Fire took place. It needs no further explanation.

August 15, 1910

Francis M. Carroll  
Temporary Fire Commissioner

Sir,

the following brief summary of the work of the fire alarm office incident to the fires of the night of the 9th inst., beginning with the receipt of the first alarm from Box 58, about 6.17.5 PM, is respectfully submitted:

The items stated herein have been collected from the several records of the office, comprising the alarm registers, the time stamp and the "log sheet" and memoranda notes hastily made on that night, all of which are at your service if called for.

The time stamp on the box alarm register shows that Box 58 was pulled at about 6.17.5, the signal was received and as shown by the time stamp, was sent out on the tappers at 6.17.22 and the department must have received at least one round of the box by 6.17.30.

The next record shows somebody operating on the circuit that Box 58 is on and it looks as if several attempts were made to call the office. Superintendent Byington says he tried to call the office shortly after the first alarm and this record is probably the result of his efforts; the characters of this record are not clear enough to make out.

The next record shows that Box 56 was pulled at about 6.20 and the time stamp shows that it was sent out at 6.20.20. When Box 56 was coming in, ADT automatic Box 65 was received and as this covers the same territory as does Box 58, it was not considered.

The next record shows Finnan, Chief Byron's driver, telegraphing from Box 58 at 6.20.30, just as the last round of 56 was coming in, and he wrote "have you" when he was given "rr" by the operator, which meant for him to repeat; he again started to telegraph and wrote the word "strike" when Box 112 came in on the same circuit and he had to stop telegraphing to prevent interference with the alarm coming in; the time stamp shows this was about 6.21.10; the operators received Box 112 and the stamp shows it was sent out at 6.21/40.

The next record shows Box 58 was pulled at 6.21.30, commencing to operate at the end of the sixth round of 112 (112 is an eight round box). No alarm was struck on this, the second pulling of 58.



The next record shows 58 pulled a third time at about 6.23.15 and a second alarm was given on this pulling at 6.23.30.

When Finnan, Chief Byron's driver, found himself interfered with at Box 58 by the alarm from 112 coming in on the same circuit, he came up to the office and ordered a third alarm for 58 and the time stamp shows this sent out at 6.24.47.

At 6.25.30, Box 70 was received but not struck out. At 6.25.50 Chief's Driver Lanigan reported at Box 56.

The next record shows Chief's Driver Moran calling on the same circuit that 58 is on, about 6.26, and in a few seconds he made a second call; between his two calls, Lanigan telegraphed the "all out" for 56, this was about 6.26.30; the operators say they knew someone was calling but were so engaged with the work in their hands they could not answer him.

At about 6.27 Finnan telegraphed from Box 58 to strike a fifth alarm for 58 and from the time stamp it appears that this was sent out at 6.28.27. Immediately following the fifth alarm, Superintendent Byington telephoned and order from Chief Grady to strike a "General Alarm" and the time stamp shows this was sent out at 6.30.30.

Superintendent Flanders arrived at headquarters about 6.30 and shortly after a messenger from Chief Grady reported to him that the Chief wanted the Fire Alarm Office to call for assistance from Cambridge, Brookline, Chelsea and the near-by towns and cities. This call for aid was started at about 6.40 and transmitted as fast as the force could get connections with the places called, but the work was delayed and interfered with by continued incoming calls from the public asking for information about the fire.

At 6.58 Box 70 was received, second time, and an alarm was struck. At about 7.15 sent a request to Chief Grady to start the water curtain if he could do so; this request was complied with in a very short time.

(NOTE- Water Curtain refers to protection for the fire alarm office located on top floor of headquarters building at 60 Bristol Street, very near to the fire)

At 7.25 Chief's Driver Finnan came to the office with orders from Chief Grady to call for assistance from cities and towns within a radius of ten or twelve miles. Believing that this call could be transmitted more expeditiously, Chief Operator Donahue requested the night manager of the MAIN telephone exchange, a Mr. Lynch, to forward the call. Mr. Lynch reported later he had complied with the request and a list of places called by him has already been forwarded. (NOTE - this list referred to has not been seen)

At 7.30 Winthrop reported they would send an engine to Engine 9 house in East Boston and they did so. At 7.33 Chelsea reported they had sent two engines to cover Charlestown and that they would respond to first alarms in East Boston.

At 7.34 Somerville reported they would cover Charlestown on alarms and Cambridge reported they would cover the west end of the city.

Fearing the possibility of losing our source of supply of Edison current from the Bristol Street mains, a message was sent to the Edison Co. office to send a force of men to give us a supply from another lead if the same became necessary; this was done only as a precautionary measure and fortunately was not needed.

At 7.51.20 an alarm was received from Box 44.

At 7.55 an alarm was received from Box 975.

At 8.03.50 an alarm was received from Box 48.

At 8.16 Chief Fox's driver reported at Box 48.

At 8.19.45 an alarm was received from Box 632.

At 8.30 a Newton company reported at Engine 3 house; we ordered them to cover at Engine 23 house, but somebody ordered them to fire at 58 and later to fire at Box 44.

At 8.33 Connolly ordered, by telegraph, an aerial truck to the fire at Box 44; sent this message to Chief Grady by two messengers, David Adamson and John B. Graham.

At 8.37 one side of the Edison current was lost and the current from the Repair Shop dynamo was switched on. At 8.43 Driver Connolly ordered a second alarm for Box 44. At 9.05 received a message from Connolly to send a water tower to the Box 44 fire; sent the message to Chief Grady by J.B. Graham.

At 9.06.30 an alarm was received from Box 52.

At 9.13.30 Box 48 was received a second time; having been informed that the former alarm from this box was for the same as Box 44 fire and that Box 52 was also for the same fire and as no one in authority was at Box 48, it was thought advisable to strike this as a first alarm only to cover possible conditions.

At 9.15 Connolly ordered the "all-out" for 52 and at 9.51 the same order for 48.

At 9.55, repairs having been made, returned to the use of Edison current.

At 11.04 an alarm from Box 241 was received.

At 3.35.35 AM August 10 an alarm from Box 254 was received.

At times the work of the office was done under a severe strain and with alarms, telegraph and telephone messages and verbal orders coming fast and considering the extraordinary conditions under which it was performed, there was practically no delay in either the receipt of the dispatch of alarms or orders.

The records show that the first seven alarms, mobilizing the apparatus for the fire at Box 58 were received and transmitted in 13 minutes and that a call for aid from out of town was under way in about 20 minutes after the first alarm was struck, a record unprecedented in previous large fires.



While for a brief period the safety of the headquarters building was somewhat threatened, there was no let-up in the despatch of the work and in adopting precautionary measures for the maintenance of this arm of the service,

For only a short time was the Edison current impaired and then only in part, due to the blowing out of a fuse in one side of the main leads coming into the building and during the entire progress of the fire the Repair Shop dynamo was kept running in case of necessity.

I would add that the following members of the office force reported for duty and rendered efficient aid:

Asst. Supt. George, on vacation, came in.

Operator Morris

Asst. Operators Collins, Gutermuth and Martin.

Foreman Cherrington, on vacation, came in and offered his aid.

Very respectfully submitted

(signed) Richard Donahue  
Chief Operator

(signed) B. S. Flanders  
Superintendent Fire Alarm