

## City's Entire Fire-Fighting Force Called for 2 Big Downtown Blazes

A four-alarm fire at Atlantic avenue and Pearl streets, following by only a few minutes a three-alarm blaze in the West End, last night concentrated almost the entire city's fire-fighting force in the downtown area and caused damage estimated at \$100,000.

The four-alarm blaze, in the five-story brick office and storehouse building at 501-519-529 Atlantic avenue, fed on piles of paper and office furniture and roared from the second floor through the roof before firemen with more than 40 hose lines brought it under control.

The earlier blaze, for which three alarms were sounded, although damage was estimated at less than \$5000, occupied considerable fire apparatus which otherwise would have been available for the four-alarm fire discovered a quarter-hour later. This fire, in a store and apartment building at Spring and Milton streets, drove out 12 persons, and was the scene of several ladder rescues.

District Chief Daniel J. Crowley was seriously injured at the Atlantic avenue fire when he fell 20 feet while working inside the building at a time when the fire was nearly out. He was taken to the City Hospital with his right leg cut and bruised, but a preliminary examination revealed no broken bone.

Excelsior and paper wrappings of office furniture stored in the Atlantic avenue building gave impetus to the blaze there, which was roaring through the furniture with the third and fourth floors ablaze when the first apparatus arrived.

The fire started on the third floor and worked down into the paper on the second as well as pushing upward through the fourth and fifth stories. The first detail of firemen to arrive quickly sounded the second, third and fourth alarms to bring in help to replenish the supply of apparatus previously sent to the West end fire.

Heavy smoke from the burning furniture balked firemen for more than an hour from entering the building. Gas masks were useless in the black smoke.

### WATER DEEP IN STREETS

Flames fed on paper stored in the Proctor Paper Company burned swiftly through the floors above. Chief Samuel A. Pope directed firemen to the roofs and upper windows of adjacent buildings, and streams were shot from their heights across both Atlantic avenue and Pearl street.

Water was a foot deep on Pearl and Congress streets while 32 engine companies were working hose lines on the blaze. Police kept all traffic from the district, but there were thousands of spectators at the scene.

Three firemen were slightly hurt. Engineman Frank Doyle was taken to the Haymarket Relief Hospital for treatment for a cut ankle, George Hellen of ladder 20 was overcome by smoke and revived at the scene, and Walter Fleming of ladder 8 cut his hand while working a hose line through a window.

Exactly 16 minutes separated the first alarms for the two fires which concentrated more apparatus in downtown Boston than for any fire of recent years. The first alarm for the West End blaze was at 8:45 P. M., and the other two at 8:49 and 8:53. The alarms for the other fire were sounded at 9:01, 9:04, 9:07 and 9:15.

Twenty engine companies, five ladder trucks and three rescue wagons were at the West End fire and the four-alarm blaze was fought by 32 engine companies, 15 ladder trucks and tower trucks and five rescue squads. Some of the apparatus was dispatched from the West End fire directly to the blaze near the waterfront.

While most of the Boston apparatus was fighting the two fires, departments of Somerville, Cambridge, Brookline, Milton and Quincy covered in at the fire stations in the outlying sections to guard against fires in those regions.



Firemen battling a four-alarm fire in a building at Atlantic avenue and Pearl street last night from extension ladders against the Pearl street side of the structure. Heavy smoke from burning leather and paper blocked them from entering the building for more than an hour.

The Atlantic avenue building, which also has entrances at 631 and 635 Pearl street, is owned by the Massachusetts General Hospital, with D. K. and L. H. Phillips the renting agents. Firms in it include the W. T. Shackley Company, leather and belting supplies dealers; the Proctor Paper Company, the L. A. B. Express Company, the Harry Kramer concern, with lighting fixtures and heavy hardware, and the Joseph Parry Company, dealers in mill machinists' supplies.

The building is known among firemen as a "jinx," as it was less than two hours after returning from a fire there Christmas night, 1914,

that Fireman Thomas W. Devney, who had been alongside his father in the ranks of firemen fighting the blaze, fell to his death down a sliding pole hole in a Congress street firehouse. He was believed to have been overcome by after effects of smoke inhalation at the fire.

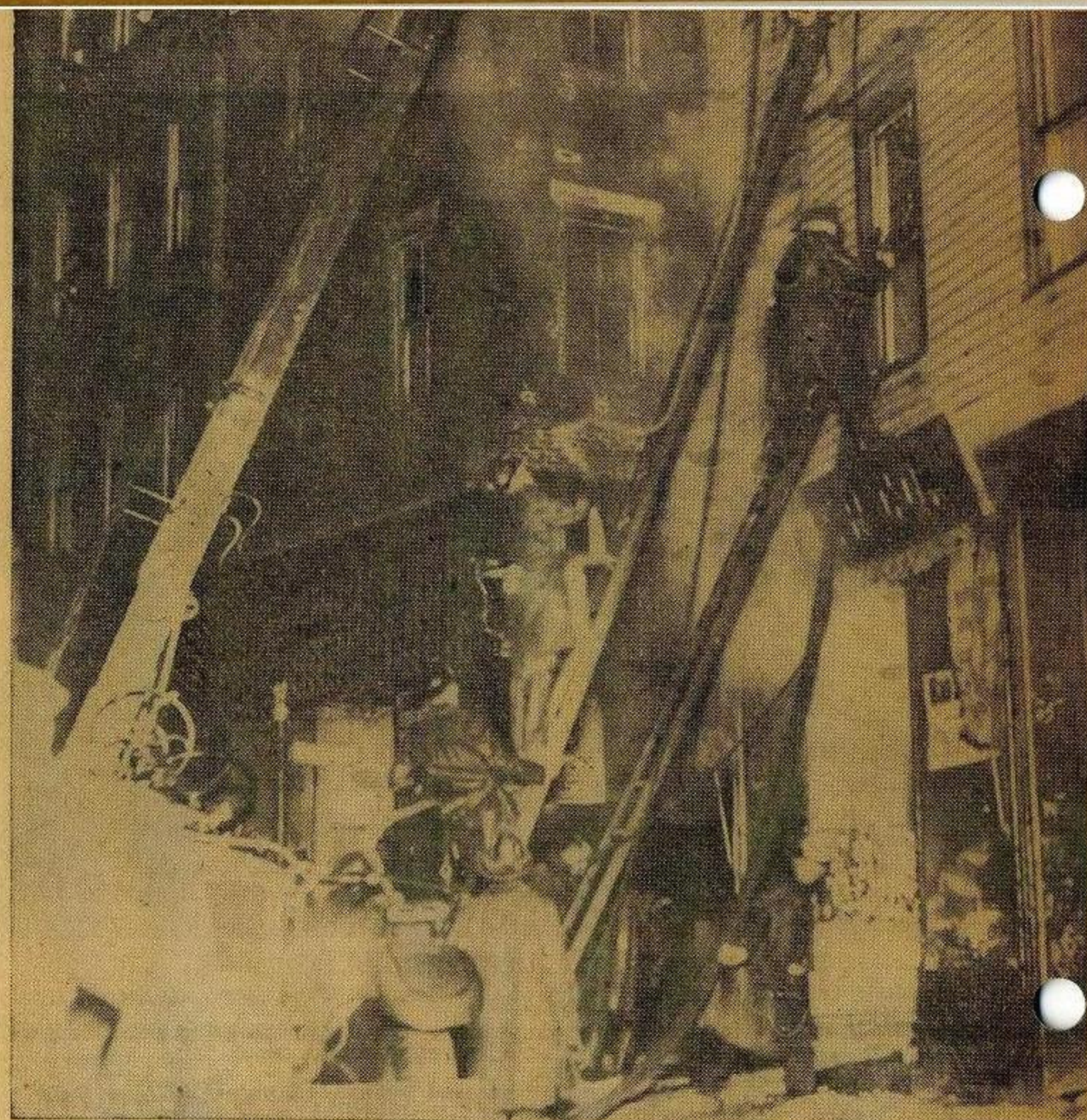
Twelve persons were driven to the street, three men carried down ladders, and several other persons rescued from their smoke-filled homes by neighbors from the West End fire.

The blaze started of undetermined origin in the cellar of a combination store and apartment building at 33 Spring street. Burning waste in the cellar sent out billows of black smoke, and the flames rapidly spread up through the building.

Firemen Walter Bannon and Fred Cavanaugh of Ladder 24 took Parvil Konorowski, 64; Ambrose Bennett and John Bonanski down ladders from their rooms at 35 Spring street, where all three had been sleeping when the fire started below them.

Keith Ross, 60, resident of an apartment facing from the Milton street side of the building, was rescued by Eli Alpert of Auburn street, and Theodore Trayler, another neighbor, carried out Ross' year-old baby, Edith. His three other children ran out through the smoke-filled hallways.

Chief Pope was early at the scene of the Spring street fire, but left when informed of the four alarms for the Pearl street blaze. District Chief William Kenney remained in charge of the force fighting the lesser of the two fires. The "all-out" was sounded at 9:19 P. M.



SCENE AT THREE-ALARM FIRE AT POPLAR AND SPRING STS, WEST END

## Seven Alarms Sounded for Fires on Atlantic Avenue and West End

The fire-fighting resources of the city were strained to the limit last night when, within a half hour, three alarms were sounded for a tenement house fire in the West End and four were rung in for a blaze which caused \$50,000 damage to a business block on Atlantic av and for a time threatened several other important business buildings on the waterfront.

Virtually every piece of apparatus in the city was called into action. Three firemen were injured at the waterfront fire in which, hampered by the cold and a chill wind blowing in from the harbor, the firemen had to fight against considerable odds in the early stages of the blaze.

### Alarms Come Rapidly

The first alarm was sounded at 8:45 from box 1345 for the fire in a three-story wooden building on Spring and Milton sts, West End. The second alarm came at 8:49, and the third at 8:53.

Seven minutes later, at 9 o'clock, the first alarm sounded for the fire in a five-story brick block at Atlantic av and Pearl st, in the paper, leather and machinery district. As traffic was halted and firemen

treated at Haymarket Relief Hospital for a cut on the right ankle. Private Walter Fleming was treated at the scene for a cut on the right hand. Ladderman George Hallen of Ladder 20 was treated at the scene for smoke inhalation.

Several other firemen, affected by smoke, were forced out of the building.

The fire was spectacular, the flames threatening to jump to other big buildings in the area, where there are many paper, leather and other business concerns.

The fire, confined chiefly to the fourth and fifth floors, burned through the roof on two occasions but firemen, working from adjoining roofs quickly stopped the bursts of flame through the roof and prevented the district being enveloped by burning embers.

On the fourth floor, where the fire started from undetermined origin, there was stored a large quantity of new office furniture, crated and packed with excelsior, and this material provided ready fuel for the flames. The fifth floor was vacant.

When firemen arrived, answering the first alarm from Box 1292 at 9 o'clock, they found flames shooting out the windows on both the Pearl-st and Atlantic-av sides of the big block.

The three lower floors and basement of the building suffered some damage, mostly by smoke and water.

### Water Tower Big Asset

The water tower was a big asset in stopping the flame on the fourth and fifth floors and the firemen on ladders did valiant work in the early stages of the fire, holding their places against flame and smoke from the windows.

The building is owned by the Massachusetts General Hospital and the D. K. and L. H. Phillips Company is renting agent.

The building stands on Pearl st from 157 to 165 and on Atlantic av from 519 to 523.

There was considerable loss to the W. T. Shackley and Son Company, leather belting manufacturers, on the second and third floors. There was also much loss to the Proctor Paper Company, which is at 161 Pearl st. For several of the firms there are main entrances or freight entrances on both sides of the block.

At 157 Pearl st is the Yellow Brothers, at 159 are Guy C. Horton, manufacturers' agents, and Howland Sons Company, mill supplies; at 161 are the renting agent and the Proctor Paper Company, and at 165 is the John P. Parry Company, machinery.

At 519 Atlantic av, John W. Horman, expressers, are located, as is Harry Kramer, electrical equipment. The L. A. B. Express is at 519½ Atlantic av. J. E. Dowling, trucking, is at 523 Atlantic av, and the W. T. Shackley and Son Company has an entrance there, too.

The arson squad of the Boston Police Department was called to the scene to aid fire officials in the investigation of the blaze.

The fire had made considerable headway before it was discovered by a passerby, who sounded the first alarm at 9 o'clock. The second followed at 9:04, the third at 9:07 and the fourth at 9:15.

Fires were felt for the firemen working on the ladders on both the Pearl-st and Atlantic-av sides of the building when they were enveloped by billowing smoke, but only a few of them felt any ill effects.

### West End Fire

A score of persons were driven from their homes by the three-alarm fire at the corner of Spring and Milton sts. The blaze started in the cellar at 33 Spring st, of undetermined origin, spread to the first and second floors, and caused damage estimated at \$5000. None was injured.

Fire apparatus choked the narrow streets and hundreds of West End residents gathered. Smoke was heavy and spread through the district, but the blaze was extinguished in short order by firemen.

The first alarm was sounded at 8:45. Because of the congested nature of the neighborhood the second and third alarms were sounded shortly afterwards at 8:49 and 8:53.

On the first floor of the building is M. Winer Company, a creamery. Damage was heaviest here. From their second-floor apartment, firemen assisted Mr and Mrs Paul Kenewicz and children, John, 32; William, 21; Veronica, 17, and Agnes, 20.

A family was assisted from the third floor by Eli Alpert, 59 Auburn st, West End, who was passing by, and firemen. Those rescued were Mrs Edith Ross; her daughter Edith, 1; Keith, 6; Percy, 8; William, 10, Nora, 12, and Pauline, 19.

From 35 Spring st, partly of the same building, three elderly men were assisted, Ambrose Bennett, 56, Porvil Konorowski, 64, and John Bonanski, 57, and Miss Pauline Blackman.

Heavy smoke filled the excitement and caused considerable alarm among the tenants, but there was little actual danger and firemen had no trouble assisting persons from the building.

Nearby residents assisted firemen in leading persons from the threatened building. Chief Samuel Pope came to direct firemen, but hurried off to the four-alarm fire, which followed on the heels of the three-alarm blaze.



WHERE FLAMES WERE HARDEST TO STOP

Firemen battling flames which roared through the fourth and fifth floors on the Pearl street side of this block for more than an hour in spite of the tons of water driven into the building from the high pressure system.