

A GREAT FIRE.

BOSTON LOSES HALF A MILLION MORE.

DESTRUCTION OF THE NATIONAL DOCK AND WAREHOUSE COMPANY'S STOREHOUSE AT EAST BOSTON—A HOT AND THREATENING CONFLAGRATION—THE FIRE ADMIRABLY HANDLED—THE FIRE-BOATS SAVE THE WHARVES.

Another disastrous conflagration has visited our already sadly burdened city. The third alarm, which, yesterday, at 3.45 P. M., sent a thrill of fear through the city, announced a threatening and rapid fire, which was confined to the building in which it originated only by the fearless and powerful efforts of the fire department. The valuable contents of an United States bonded warehouse, destroyed by the flames, are lost, as in our other conflagrations, to the large merchants of the city, chiefly those who were connected with the East India trade. Another volley of grumbling denunciation and wails cast upon our fire department cannot alter the fact that yesterday's calamity could not be prevented by human efforts, and that, until combustible material is swept from the earth, such buildings will burn, despite a legion of steamers and ladders. The building destroyed was the property of the National Dock and Warehouse Company, situated at the foot of Lewis street in East Boston, extending to the company's wharf by the side of the old East Boston ferry dock. The warehouse was well filled with bonded stock, consisting largely of hemp, sugar and gunny cloth, besides wool, leather, linseed oil and promiscuous East Indian merchandise. The part of the block destroyed was one separated from a larger and more valuable warehouse by a wall which warded off a fearful loss.

The fire was discovered by a member of steamer 11, at twenty-nine minutes past three in the afternoon. Seeing smoke issuing from the roof he hastened to Officer George Crandall of Station VII., who immediately sounded the alarm from box 151. The alarm was followed by a second and third which summoned the whole department to the scene. In a few minutes after the signal the flames had spread over the whole roof, and hopes of saving the stock were evidently useless.

The building was divided into three portions by two party-walls, but the iron doors were wide open, and a clear passage was thereby furnished the swift flames. The East Boston steamers were first upon the ground, and were soon reinforced by steamer 8 and hose 1, from the first ferry-boat, and later by hose 3 and hook and ladder 1 from the second. The flames in the meantime leaped unchecked over the tinder-like bales of hemp, and shot up high through the roof, which was completely honey-combed. Dense volumes of coal-black smoke rolled out from the roof and windows, billowing upward, darkening the heavens and making the sun but a lurid spot. The firemen worked bravely to confine the flames, and the product of their efforts can only be appreciated by a view of the slight frame-work which stood between the fire and the adjoining buildings, one of which, the ferry-house, was of wood and in close proximity to the seething mass. The department was under the command of Capt. Dunbar until 5.30 o'clock, when Mr. Damrell returned from Manchester in response to a telegram. The books of the warehouse were removed to a place of safety, and the office furniture was also saved.

The insurance brigade met with a serious loss by the destruction of its blankets, which were caught by the flames before they could be removed. It will cost fully \$1600 to replace them. The fire-boat did wonderful service, bringing to bear all the streams necessary to flood the rear of the block, and saving the wharf from destruction. The fire-boat Wm. M. Flanders proved itself an indispensable auxiliary to the fire department. Its eight streams rendered powerful aid, and the crutched hose carried its huge volume of water far above its companions. The fire-boat and the "Louis Osborn," of the Boston Tow-boat Company, were first to protect the water side, and they were assisted by the water-boat "Flora" and the government tug "Cohasset."

The land forces were concentrated in front of the block, and displayed the intrepidity of which cynics are inclined to complain, but without which the fire of yesterday would have been hard to conquer. As an example of the uncertainty which governs dangerous points in large fires may be cited the falling of a portion of the outside wall during the thick of the fire. Fifty men had labored strenuously for a long time to pull it down, and at last abandoned it as useless. Hardly had they cleared the rope when the wall tottered and fell with a thundering crash.

The East Boston steamers were promptly on the ground, but unaided could do but little service. Steamers 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10 and 12; and hose companies 1, 2 and 3 came from the city proper in response to the third alarm, and the wagons of hook and ladder companies 1, 2 and 3 stood empty until their departure, late in the evening, when they were relieved by 4 and 5, who were called to take their place by a hook and ladder signal at 7.45 o'clock.

ORIGIN OF THE FIRE.

For several days no deliveries have been made at the warehouse, and the only persons who entered the building, yesterday, were two slaters, who had for some days been occupied mending the roof. A short time before the discovery of the fire, they left the building, and have not been seen since. It is a significant fact that they are both smokers, and it is possible, at least, that the flames were kindled from a match or spark carelessly allowed to reach the hemp stored in the building.

THE FLAMES CONTROLLED.

The efforts of the department were principally directed to the security of the rest of the block and the ferry-house, which, being a wooden structure, was constantly in danger. A complete network of streams poured upon the huge wall of the adjoining warehouse, and at nine o'clock, by dint of ropes and hooks, the burning mass in which the wall was imbedded was rendered harmless, while the flames were completely subdued in the vicinity of the ferry-house.

THE LOSSES AND INSURANCES.

The individual losers, so far as could be learned, were as follows:

The National Dock and Warehouse Company loses probably \$50,000 by the burning of the storehouse, on which the insurance will reach something like \$40,000. Mr. Thatcher Loring, the superintendent, was unable to give the exact figures.

J. Gardner Curtis & Co. lost from \$100,000 to \$125,000, their stock consisting mainly of sugar and jute.

William F. Weld & Co., 42 Central wharf, lose sugar to the value of \$70,000, on which they had \$10,000 insurance in the Shoe and Leather, \$5000 in the Liverpool, London and Globe, \$5000 each in the Equitable and Atlantic of Providence, R. I., \$15,000 in the Boylston, \$10,000 in the American of Boston, \$10,000 in the Firemen's Fund of San Francisco, and \$10,000 in the Franklin of Boston. Silsby, Pickman & Co., importers of hemp, lose, probably, \$150,000, on which there was a partial insurance.

Wills, Edmonds & Co., 86 State street, were heavy losers, their stock consisting of a large amount of gunny cloth. Their insurance is \$26,000 in companies whose names could not be learned. Nathaniel Goddard, No. 10 Merchants row, loses \$15,000 on gunny cloth. He was insured to the full amount in the London Assurance, Globe, Mercantile, Maine and other companies.

Thomas E. Proctor loses \$10,000 on hides stored in the building; no details as to insurance.

Besides these, the following-named firms lose by the fire, but to what amounts it was impossible to learn:

Sewall, Day & Co., Boston Cordage Company, Henry Gardiner, William Perkins & Co., Whitney & Cushing, Benjamin S. Pray & Co., Alexander McKenny & Co., Denny, Rice & Co., J. H. Burgess & Co., and several New York firms which had property stored in the warehouse.

The total loss will amount to half a million, and the insurance is large on the stock of the various owners.

The following are the losses sustained by the different insurance companies, as nearly as could be ascertained up to a late hour, this morning:

Liverpool, London and Globe.....	\$30,000
Ellison, Hollis & Co., agents for the Home and other New York companies.....	40,000
Franklin of Boston.....	20,000
Boylston of Boston.....	35,000
Clinton of New York.....	1,500
Washington of New York.....	9,100
Queen.....	10,000
Royal Insurance Company of North America, Insurance Company of the State of Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Insurance Company.....	70,000
Lamar of New York.....	10,000
London Assurance, Globe, Mercantile, Marine and other companies.....	15,000
Equitable of Providence.....	5,000
Atlantic of Providence.....	5,000
American of Boston.....	10,000
Firemen's Fund of San Francisco.....	10,000
Shoe and Leather of Boston.....	10,000
	\$281,500

The Etna, Mutual and Manufacturers' also sustained losses, but the amounts could not be ascertained.

SCENES AND INCIDENTS.

As is inevitable, at large fires, the event drew together a large crowd, which the police force kept in excellent order. Only two accidents occurred, during the whole afternoon and evening. A boy was run over by an express wagon, near the scene of the fire, and severely injured; and a fireman was slightly hurt, while at work too near the falling bricks and chuders.

The greatest difficulty was experienced in ascertaining the amounts to owners and insurance companies, the representatives of the warehouse company being either unwilling or unable to give any information from their books, which were close at hand. Nearly all the losers were out of town, and consequently very little definite information was to be gained concerning their losses.

Up to a few weeks ago, the Clinton Insurance Company of New York had from \$40,000 to \$50,000 of risks on the property destroyed, but as it was, lost but \$1500.

The Lamar of New York had \$20,000 on the property, \$10,000 of which expired at noon, yesterday. The policies for \$10,000, on which it lost, would have expired at noon, to-day.

As soon as the location and probable extent of the fire was discovered, there was of course a general overhauling of the books and policies by insurance companies and agencies to ascertain the extent of their losses.