

## Adelaide Fire Brigade 1861

***South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Monday 21 January 1861, page 3***

### FIRE IN MORPHETT-STREET.

On Saturday last, January 19th, about midnight, a fire broke out in a wooden building in the rear of Mr. Reed's public-house, Morphett-street. The building was used for storing hay, and when the fire was first discovered the flames were threatening to assume an alarming magnitude ; but being discovered almost instantly, and the alarm being given, and plenty of assistance promptly at hand, the flames were arrested in time to save the adjoining buildings. There is no doubt the fire would have extended to a most destructive extent, the shed being situated in the centre of a mass of old buildings, had it not been for a small engine belonging to Mr. Heed, which was on the premises, and quickly brought into play upon the conflagration. The fire is supposed to be the doings of some incendiary and a woman, named Ann Burns, is in custody on suspicion of either being the cause of the fire herself, or having a knowledge of the person who did it. The whole of the Companies engines turned out on the occasion, but the fire being sufficiently subdued before their arrival, their services were not made use of. A strong body of police was also in attendance on the ground. An inquest on the cause of the fire will be held by the Coroner this morning.

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### POLICE COURT— ADELAIDE.

MONDAY, JANUARY 21.

[Before Mr. S. Beddome, P.M.]

CHARGE OF ARSON.— Annie Burns was charged with having on the 20th January last, set fire to a hay shed, the property of John Heed, of the Albion Hotel Adelaide. The prisoner pleaded not guilty. The informant stated that the shed burnt down was at the back of his house, the Albion Hotel. There were two rooms in it. He locked it on Saturday last ; there was hay in it. On Saturday evening, at about half-past seven, heard his wife and the prisoner talking about a fire. The prisoner said— "Oh, Mr. Heed, I have just put out a fire near the stable, the sparks were all flying about. " Went with her to where she said the fire was and could see no appearance of a fire there. Asked her if she had been smoking. She said, "No, but I saw a man smoking there. "She said she would know him again if she saw him. Whilst standing near the house, about half an hour afterwards, he saw his servant man come out of Polly Long's. Thinking that something was up, he went into the closet to listen to the man and the prisoner talking. Heard her tell the man that her feet were wet. She also said " Look, there are some of the sparks now. "The man replied, I'm —— if I see them. He (witness) then put his head out of the closet, but could see no sparks. Thinking nothing was up he went into his own house, and in about five minutes after the alarm was given that the hay-shed was on fire. Ran out and saw the place in flames.

Ordered some men to work his own engine and by their assistance subdued the flames. From the information he received, he acquainted the police of her conversation previous to the fire. She told him that she heard a man say that "I (meaning witness) had done for him, and he would do for me." She told witness's man that she was sure there would be a fire that night". From the way she acted in the matter, he believed she must have attempted to

fire the place, and thinking that it would soon be in flames, she ran and gave the alarm, but not being successful, she must have fired it again, and gave the alarm. She borrowed matches about a quarter of an hour previous to the fire. There were no signs of a fire when she first gave the alarm. Examined the place with Police Constable Everdale, and could see no signs of the fire. By His Worship. Had no quarrel with the prisoner. Had turned her out of his house. John Wood stated he lived at Mr Heed's, as servant. Went on Saturday night to Mrs Long's, at about half-past 11. When he came out he saw the prisoner throwing water on the ground. She said there was a fire. Could see none, and told her so. She then said, when he kicked the dung over, "Can't you see it now ?" Said no. She then threw more water on it.

He then went into the house, and in about ten minutes after she called him and said, "I'm certain there's a fire here, come and look in the hay shed and smell it" Could smell nothing, nor see any fire. He then went in again for about three minutes when she came in and said "come and look now and see whether you will believe me." He then saw the flames about one foot high above the door step. The stable was of brick with iron roof. By His Worship— Could see no man about the premises. By P.C. Everdale—There was room in the door to introduce a match. Eddy Daley stated that she lived with Mrs. McFie. On Saturday night, at about 2 minutes past 12 o'clock the prisoner came to witness and said "lend me some matches" She also said lookout and see the fire at Mr Heed's; I have been putting it out. Looked out but could see no fire. Told her there was none. She replied "If there is none now there will be." If there had been fire she should have seen it. In about three quarters of an hour after she borrowed the matches saw the place on fire. By the prisoner—It was not whilst the place was on fire that you asked for the match's. Mary Lang stated that the prisoner lodged with her. At about half past 11 on Saturday night she came to her and said that Mr Heed s place was on fire. Could see no fire. In about three quarters of an hour afterwards she came again and said the place was on fire. Heard her use no threats. The house she (witness) and prisoner lived in was next door to the shed. Kept two boxes of matches on the mantelpiece that night. Corporal Brown stated he was present when Police constable Everdale arrested the prisoner. Told her the charge, she said "I did not do it ; my curse on those who have informed on me." On the way to the station she said "Is it likely I would set the place on fire? I carried more water to it than any body there." She could not describe the man on the way to the station, but said he was a tall man. Previous to that she described the clothes he wore. She also said that she went for the matches during the time the fire was going on. The prisoner on being called on for her defence, denied all knowledge of the origin of the fire. The prisoner was committed to take her trial at the next sitting of the Supreme Court.



B 3845

*State Library of South Australia - City Produce Company, Morphett Street [B 3845], [General description] A man and some children pose for the photographer outside this dilapidated building, probably once the premises of the Albion Hotel, which appears to be in the first stages of demolition. [On back of photograph] 'Acre 70 / Morphett Street, west side / 1910-19. / The far side of the City Produce Co.'s building is 57 yards south of Hindley Street. Near side of building \* on the corner is 38.5 yards south of Hindley Street. \*The Albion Hotel (see list of licences 1839-40) is said to have occupied this site.' (Another hand) 'Correct. See Duryea Panorama' (Another hand) 'Copied from a photo. in the possession of the S.A. Branch of the Royal Geographical Society'. A hard copy version of the photo has the inscription 'The building in the corner was one of the first hotels built in Adelaide and called the Albion Hotel. Kept by Jack Heed and old sport. The building with City Produce Co was built some years later and was used as a dancing hall. J. Lewis.' Approximately 1910. Photographer, Smith, W.S. Part of Acre 70 Collection.*

***The South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889) Fri 10 May 1861 Page 2***

FIRE AT GEPP'S CROSS.—At 4 o'clock on Thursday morning, the police-constable on duty on North-terrace gave notice to the Superintendent of Fire Brigades that there was a large fire a few miles to the north. Mr. Baker immediately turned out and went as far as the Old Windmill, on the North-road, but the fire still appearing to be at a considerable distance he returned. At 9 o'clock a person came in to report that Ragless's mill was burning, and to ask for the engine to be sent out. The Superintendent on consulting with the various Insurance Offices, found that the mill property was insured for £3,000 in the Northern Assurance Office. It was considered at that late period from the commencement of the fire, it would be of little use to send the engine, but one of the representatives of the Northern Assurance Company accompanied the Superintendent to the place. They found the mill entirely gutted, but the steam-engine and boilers uninjured. They left a man in charge to look after the premises, and especially to prevent the floor of the engine-room from catching fire. The

building being lofty and much injured by the fire, is scarcely considered safe ; the west gable particularly is thought dangerous. No doubt at the inquest the Coroner will order measures to be taken to ensure the safety of the public. Some suspicious circumstances are said to exist in connection with the fire, but as they will be brought out at the inquest, we forbear to publish such particulars as we are in possession of until to-morrow.