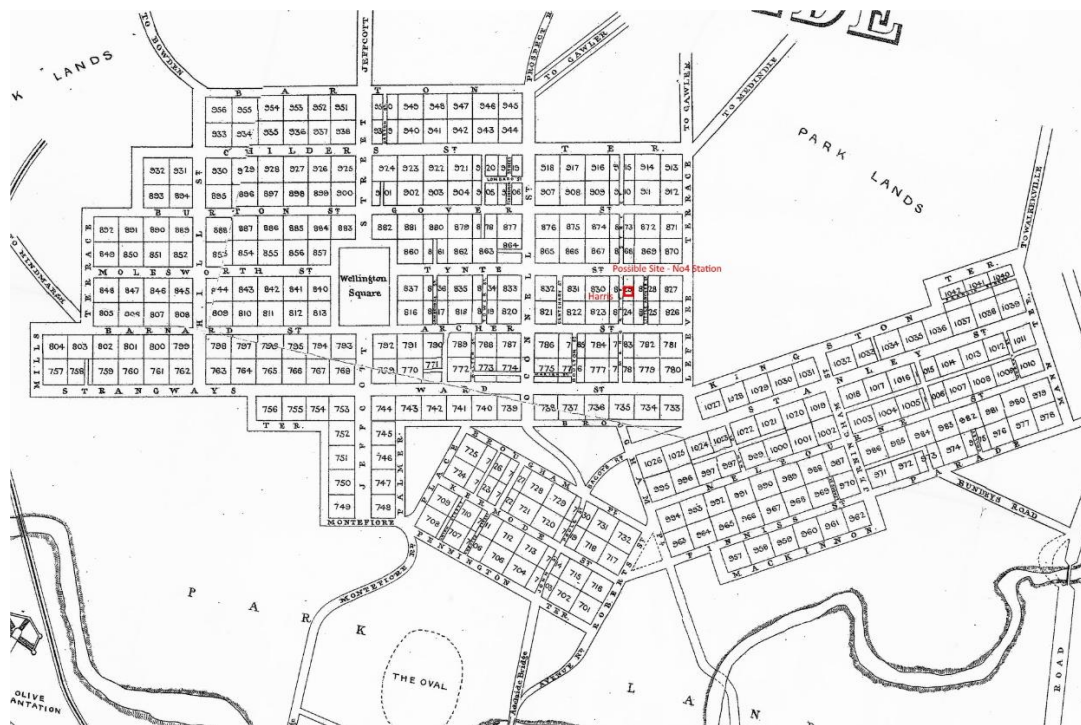


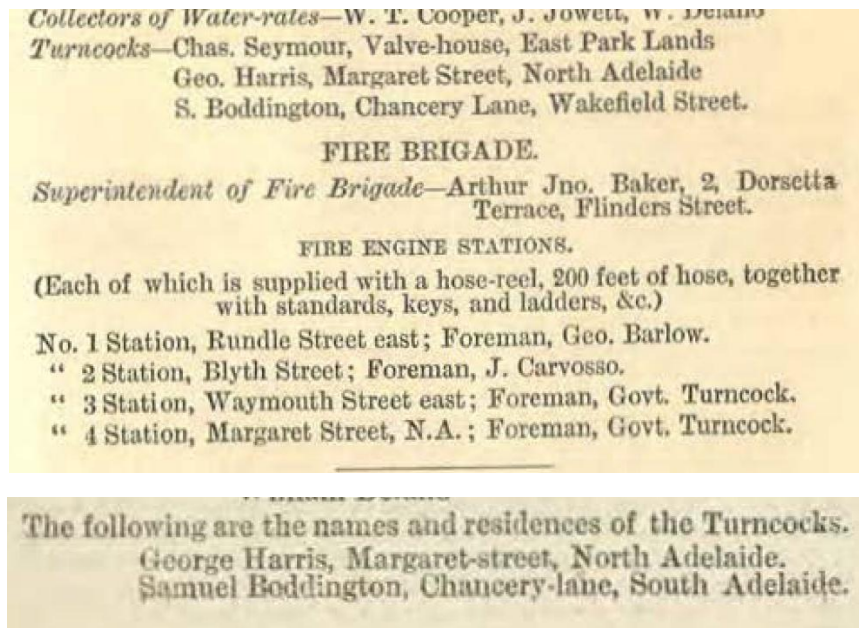
Adelaide Fire Brigade 1865

Fire Station locations in South Adelaide



Fire Station locations in South Adelaide





Boothby 1865

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Friday 28 July 1865, page 2

FIRE IN HINDLEY-STREET. —Adelaide has long enjoyed immunity from that fearful visitation— house-burning— so destructive in other cities. Last night, however, about 10 o'clock, the fire-bell sounded an alarm, and a rush of people in the direction of the eastern corner of Hindley and Leigh streets indicated the locality of a conflagration. Constable Wilcox gave prompt information to the Superintendent of Fire Brigades, and in a very few minutes that active officer was at the premises of Mr. Dodgson, painter and plumber, where there were visible indications of a destroying fire within. The Superintendent kept the doors closed until the apparatus (No. 2 Reel) was connected with the main, and then the water was thrown in with such effect that the fire was rapidly extinguished. On examining the premises the Superintendent found that the fire in all probability originated in some Cotton-waste that lay on the floor at the rear of the shop. There was a can of fish-oil near the cotton-waste which was boiling-hot when examined. It appeared that the burning cotton-waste communicated the fire to paper on the shelves, and the flames also attacked the staircase leading to the showrooms on the first floor. Mr. Dodgson and his son were present, and anxiously assisted in the suppression of the flames. A small portion of the stock and some shelving have been burnt, but we have not heard the actual amount of loss. We believe Mr. Dodgson is fully insured ; but it would be a matter of regret should any serious damage occur to the building, which is part of the handsome pile erected on the Church property.

South Australian Weekly Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1867), Saturday 29 July 1865, page 2

INQUEST ON FIRE.

An inquest was held by the Coroner (Dr. Woodforde), at the Black Horse Inn, on Friday morning, July 28, on the fire which occurred on the previous night upon the premises of Mr Robert Dodgson, painter and glazier, at the corner of Hindley and Leigh streets. A respectable Jury of 13 having been empanelled, Mr. Frederick Hasluck was chosen foreman. They then proceeded to visit the scene of the conflagration— which, although it

had been of short duration, had done a considerable amount of damage, after which they returned to the Inn, and the following evidence was elicited:— Mr. George Dodgson, plumber and painter, son of Mr. Robert Dodgson, stated that the premises upon which the fire took place belonged to his father. Was continually on the premises in the position of salesman. Was there on Thursday till about 6 o'clock. The shop was always closed at half-past 6. Generally shut the shop himself, but on Thursday night he left it for the shopman to do. Mr. Fraser was the shopman. He had been fifteen months in their employ as such. Never knew him smoke in the shop, and he was not a person given to drink. Was out spending the evening, when some person came and told him their shop was on fire. Proceeded there at once, and saw a crowd of people around the house. Obtained the key of the shop, which was hung up in a certain place in the yard. It was placed in the yard so that the shopman might gain access to the shop when he wished. Refused to give the key to any one but Mr. A. J. Baker, the Superintendent of the Fire Brigade. Did not allow any one to enter the house. Believed the people would have got into the shop through the windows had not the police kept them back. The shutters were up to both windows of the shop. Could see the fire through the office window. Could not see the fire itself through that window, but only the reflection of it. Mr. A. J. Baker was the first to enter the house. His (witness's) father expressed his desire to save from the devouring element his letters, which were prepared for transmission to England by the mail, and were in imminent danger of being destroyed. Before the fire was put out a person got in through the window, and took the drawers which contained his father's letters, and handed them out of the window. Could not account for the fire, except under the supposition that a quantity of cotton waste, which was used for cleaning greasy bottles and for wiping their hands when they had them covered with oil had become ignited. The lights burnt in the shop were all gas. When he entered the shop during the evening he generally took a candle. Mr. Donald Fraser, shopman in Mr. K. Dodgson's employ, said he was engaged in business in Mr. Dodgson's shop till half-past 6 o'clock. Put up the shutters himself, and turned the gas out After he had done so there were no other lights in the shop. Knew where the pile of cotton was kept. It was kept at the back of the cellar door, and under the stairs. It had been in the shop about three weeks. Had never felt it in any way hot or noticed any marks of combustion about it. After he had shut up the shop, and was just going away, he met a carpenter, who desired some vermilion. Very reluctantly went back into the shop to get what was wanted. To see what he was doing he struck a match. While he was there the match went completely out, and he let it fall on the floor, about 12 feet from the pile of cotton waste. That match was the only one lit after the gas was turned out. The matches were kept in a particular place in the shop. The match with which he stuck a light was one of a few which he had in his pocket at the time. By the Jury— After I lit the match I let it fall on the ground. The head of the match did not fly off. Joseph Rowe, plumber and glazier, of Hindley-street, deposed that he saw the fire in Mr. Dodgson's shop about a quarter to 10 o'clock on Thursday night At about that time he sent his son out to put up their shutters. After he had put up two he came running in and said Mr. Dodgson's shop was on fire. Went outside, and saw the blaze suddenly brighten, and then almost die out again. Saw it through the keyhole of the shop-door. The staircase was on fire. It appeared to have originated in the corner where the cotton waste was placed. Had heard of cotton-waste catching fire of itself. Had known it become hot and smoulder, but had never known it burst out into a flame. By the Jury— Had heard of cotton waste taking fire of itself. At the time when he first saw the fire there was no one near the shop. Mr. Thomas Morgan, painter, of Adelaide, stated that he witnessed the fire on the previous night. Was passing

along Hindley-street toward King William-street when his attention was attracted by a strange odour. Afterwards saw a blue flame like a rocket fly across the shop. Jumped up to the window and saw the fire within. Went for a police-constable, and Constable Dempsey returned with him. Went to the dwelling-house to try and obtain the key of the shop, but was unable, as the servant did not know where it was. When he first saw the fire it appeared to be smouldering. It was smouldering in the place that had been pointed out as the place where the cotton waste was. Mr. A. J. Baker, Superintendent of the Fire Brigade, said the first he heard of the fire on Thursday night was when Constable Wilcox came to his home in a cab. It was about ten minutes to 10 o'clock. When they got as far as King William-street he heard the fire-bell commence ringing. Mr. George Dodgson gave him the key of the house. When he opened the door and discharged water upon the fire it went out in less than five minutes. Had trouble generally to find the water-plugs, but on this occasion he had none. He approved of the method lately introduced by the Corporation of placing posts to mark the fire-plugs, but when they were used both to mark the situations of the fire-plugs and to define the boundary of the path, with the only dis-similarity that one possessed a Gothic top while the top of the other was quite round, he thought it might be difficult even now to find the fire-plug very quickly in some places. He would also like to notice that in some streets the post marking the fire-plug was placed on the opposite side of the street to that of the plug. It was his opinion that the fire-plug posts were not so plain as they ought to be. Believed the fire originated in the cotton waste. On the other side of the wall against which the cotton waste was placed there was a fireplace which would cause its temperature to be increased considerably. He would say, for the benefit of the public, that if the doors of a house which was on fire were kept closed, the fire would be put out by the smoke. By the Foreman— Believed the staircase was on fire before the door was opened. By the Jury —It is quite probable that cotton waste would cause a fire. Mr. Dodgson's shop had a fire-plug near it. By the Coroner— Had no difficulty in obtaining the assistance of the police. This being the whole of the evidence, the Coroner addressed the Jury. He stated that there was no difficulty whatever in seeing how the fire occurred. It appeared, as Mr. G. Dodgson had said, to have been caused by the spontaneous combustion of a quantity of cotton waste, which had, from being frequently used for some time for the purpose of wiping greasy things, become impregnated with oil. He drew their attention to the fact that a match on the same evening had been lit in the shop, to show that that was not the origin of the fire. The conflagration commenced, no doubt in the heap of cotton waste, which statement was corroborated by the evidence of Mr. Rowe, who said he saw the fire blaze up, and afterwards diminish, which would naturally result from the burning of a light inflammable material like cotton waste. The fact that cotton waste, hemp, &c., would ignite of their own accord could not be too deeply impressed upon the minds of all tradesmen. He hoped its use would be discontinued ; but if it was indispensable, then he trusted it would be used with greater care. The evidence also showed that there was a fireplace in the wall against which the cotton waste was placed, which increased its temperature, and thereby encouraged spontaneous combustion. He was of opinion that the police should always act like they had on that occasion, and prevent persons from opening the doors. For when they were opened it was like putting a bellows to the fire. He thought every facility should be provided for finding the water-plugs, and if any difficulty existed at the present time he hoped it would be speedily removed. The Jury could either return a verdict that the fire was caused by the ignition of the cotton waste or else an open verdict The Jury, after a brief consideration, returned the following verdict:—"That the said fire was accidental, and was caused by the

spontaneous, combustion of a quantity of cotton waste impregnated with oil, which was in the shop at the time that the fire broke out."

Adelaide Observer (SA : 1843 - 1904), Saturday 12 August 1865, page 5

SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION OF COTTON WASTE.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—Referring to the notice in your issue of last week respecting the fire which occurred at Mr. Dodgson's, and its being attributed to the ignition of some cotton waste near to which was placed some boiling oil, it may be worth while to state that in 1852, after the disastrous burning of the West India mail steamship Amazon, in the English Channel, attributed to the same cause as the fire at Mr. Dodgson's, several experiments were made as to the spontaneous combustion of cotton waste when saturated or wetted by oil.

The experiments were made at one of the Royal Dockyards in the following manner:—The cotton waste was slightly damped or wetted by oil, and was placed on a stone slab inside a room. The room was heated to a temperature of 70° or 80°, I forget the exact heat, when by looking through a window it was observed in a very short space of time combustion was progressing, and eventually the cotton waste ignited. It is reasonable to suppose the fire at Mr. Dodgson's took place from the same cause.

Perhaps the publication of this letter may serve as a caution to persons ignorant of the dangerous tendency which cotton waste has to ignite under the circumstances above detailed.

I am, Sir, &c. B. DOUGLAS. Port Adelaide, July 31, 1863.

Adelaide Express (SA : 1863 - 1866), Wednesday 20 September 1865, page 2

GENERAL NEWS.

To-day, about half-past 12 o'clock, smoke was seen issuing from the roof of the drapery shop of Mr. S. Solomon, next door to Mr. S. Hart's store, in Hindley-street. Attention was at once drawn to it, and No. 2 Hose reel arrived almost immediately from Carvosso's. In a short time the hose was attached and a jet of water turned upon the shingle roof where the fire was burning. Mr. J. M. Linklater, who was almost immediately on the ground, directed the operations of the firemen, and Messrs. E. W. Wright and G. Von der Heyde, the agents for the Imperial and Northern Fire Insurance Companies, in which offices, we believe, the premises are insured, were also active. In less than half-an-hour the fire had been mastered, though scarcely extinguished, and the flames were confined to the roof. The water fell through the ceilings and almost deluged the rooms below, and the goods in the shop were thoroughly saturated. The fire was caused by the chimney catching fire, and a spark being communicated to the shingle roof, which is very old, and in consequence of the hot weather was easily ignited. It is very fortunate that the fire was confined to Mr. Solomon's house, as Mr. Hart's drapery store adjoins the property, and Messrs. Blyth Brothers' ironmongery establishment, is next to Mr. Hart's. The property is the freehold of Mr. T. Playford, and is leased by Mr. Solomon. The term, we hear, is nearly expired.

Adelaide Express (SA : 1863 - 1866), Saturday 23 September 1865, page 3

THE LATE FIRE IN HINDLEY STREET.

On Saturday morning Dr. Woodroffe held an inquest upon the fire which occurred on Wednesday on the premises Mr. S. Solomon, in Hindley-street. The enquiry was conducted at the Royal Hotel before a Jury of 16, whose foreman Mr S. Sach. Mr. Downer attended on behalf of Mr. Solomon, and Mr. G. Von der Heyde watched the proceedings on behalf of the Northern Insurance Co.

Samuel Solomon said he occupied the premises which were known as the Burra Burra House, in Hindley-street A fire occurred there on Wednesday last. Did not see the fire break out, as he was away from home at the time. Left home about half-past 11 o'clock and returned at half past 12. Before he reached home, he saw drays at the door taking some goods away, and a number of persons about the place. Did not see any fire when he came back, but the house was full of water. Knew nothing of the fire until he came home. The roof was of shingle and was very old. The only fire in the house when he left was one in the kitchen which had been lighted to cook the breakfast. The kitchen was below the level of Hindley-street. The chimney goes above the roof. After breakfast some soot was burning in the bend of the chimney about 10 or 12 feet from the fire place. Mr. Isaacs, of 51 Hindley-street, called his attention to his chimney being on fire. Laid a wet bag across the top of the chimney, and covered it with a board upon which he placed a heavy log of wood. He afterwards left the roof and looked into the chimney from the kitchen, but he saw no fire there. The fire was then quite out. Looked up several times but did not see any fire. The fire was not above the bend in the chimney.

An adjournment here took place to view the premises when

Examination continued—The bag produced and the board and log were put upon the chimney, It was unburnt, and remained on the chimney during the fire on the roof. Did not know who took it off the chimney, nor did he know when it was taken off. Did not know from personal knowledge that the bag and log were on the chimney during the fire, but had been told so.

By the Jury—Did not send for a chimney sweep to examine the chimney. Did not see any fire on the shingles, or in the eaves when he was on the roof.

By Mr. G. Von der Heyde—Made no other attempt to put out the fire in the chimney than putting the bag on the top. When the chimney was seen to be on fire the embers were all put out, and were not lighted again. About three months ago the chimney was last swept. The chimney did not feel at all hot when he was on the roof.

Mr. Downer said he attended on behalf of Mr. Solomon, and should like to suggest one or two questions.

The Coroner said he could not allow any interference with the proceedings. If there were any circumstances tending to throw suspicion upon Mr. Solomon he should have cautioned him, and given him the privilege of obtaining the assistance of a professional gentleman.

Mr. Downer—asked the Coroner to explain the difference between Mr. von der Heyde and himself as Mr. von der Heyde had been allowed to ask questions.

The Coroner—Are you a witness. Mr, Downer No I am not.

The Coroner—Then I positively deny you. The object of these enquiries is mostly to protect Insurance Companies, and Mr. von der Heyde attends on behalf of the Northern Insurance

Company. I do not single you out as an exception, but I make it a rule not to have my enquiries interrupted. I have always adopted this system, and intend to adhere to it. Mr. Downer was about to suggest that the Coroner should ask whether Mr. Solomon saw any of his neighbors chimnies on fire.

The Coroner said he could not allow any person to interrupt the proceedings.

Mr. Downer thought he had as good a right to appear there as Mr. von der Heyde.

The Coroner said they were at issue on that point. That was his Court, and he had full jurisdiction in it, as Mr. Downer would see by the Coroner's Act.

Mr. Solomon in reply to a question from the Coroner said when on the roof he saw smoke issuing from one of his neighbors' chimney.

Thomas Dicketts, storeman, at Blyth Brothers, said he was in back store at about half-pass 12 o'clock on Wednesday when Miss Solomon and the servant called him to look at the ceiling as they thought there was a fire in the house. When he got to the top of the staircase he heard the fire blazing over the ceiling. He returned to the store from the top loft of which he saw the roof on fire. The fire was not close to the chimney, but between the stack and Hindley-street. The fire had burnt a hole in the roof. Did not see a bag on top of the chimney. There might have been one. Did not see any chimney on fire that morning.

Robert Aveling, storeman at Messrs. Tuxford, said he was in McGarlick's yard, on North-terrace, about 20 minutes to 1 o'clock on Wednesday, when he saw a fire at Solomon's. Ran into Rundle-street to see if he could render any assistance, and went on to the roof with others and assisted to take the hose up. He found the whole of the front part of the roof in ablaze. The fire was soon put out, and afterwards saw a bag on the top of the stack of chimnies with some wood upon it. Went across to the chimney and took the bag off. It was quite dry, and was not burnt. The inside of the chimney was white, and the soot had evidently been calcined. There was no fire in the chimney at the time. Did not examine the chimney from below. Drew Mr. Von der Heyde's attention to the fact that the chimney had been on fire. The stack was very warm. The wind was blowing north-north-west, and apparently in a direct line from the broad stack to where the fire originated. There was not the slightest evidence of any of the other chimnies in the stack having been on fire.

By Mr. von der Heyde—A dry bag, if it stopped the draught, would extinguish any fire in the chimney. Should think that was the best plan to adopt. The bag might have been wet when it was put on the chimney, as he did not see it for nearly two hours afterwards.

Henry Husband, bodymaker at Carvosso's, deposed to having taken the hose-reel to Mr. Solomon's premises. The roof was on fire when they got there. Saw a bag and wood on the top of the chimney. Had been a member of the Fire Brigade for eight years. Considered the old shingle roofs very inflammable and dangerous. Thought it very possible that a spark from the chimney, before the bag was put on it, would have smouldered on the shingles for a long time, especially on such a day as Wednesday, when the hot wind was blowing. Was of opinion that a spark caught the inside of the roof, and thought the spark might have come through a little crevice in the stack.

The Coroner thought it important that the chimney should be examined to see whether the chimney was delapidated. The foreman, witness, and some other gentleman then examined

the chimney, and returning the witness said after examination he found his impression to be wrong, as the chimney was quite perfect below the roof.

S. H. Isaacs, of Hindley-street, draper, gave evidence as the chimney being fire about 11 o'clock on Wednesday. Mrs. Solomon called him in, and the chimney was then on fire and blazing. Called Mr. Solomon, whom he had seen going up the street, and he (witness) held a rug before the fireplace, and extinguished the embers. Looked up the chimney about half-an-hour afterwards, and the fire was then out.

The Coroner referred to the straightforwardness of the evidence, and thought the Jury could not do other than return a verdict of accidental origin. He thought it very probable that a spark from the chimney might have lodged in the interstices of the roof, which being old and decayed would burn almost like tinder. He thought it very unfortunate that the attention of the City Corporation should be drawn to the fact of these shingle roofs being in existence, as they were very dangerous. He thought they should be all done away with.

Mr. Wright could not agree to any such recommendation as that. He thought it was more a matter for insurance offices than for the City Council. The insurance companies could decline to insure such buildings. The Coroner, thought the Corporation had more to do with a question involving life as well as property than the insurance companies.

After a little consideration the Jury returned a verdict— that the fire was accidental, and that it originated, in the opinion of the Jury, from a spark lodging in the roof, and coming from the chimney which was on fire in the morning.

South Australian Weekly Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1867), Saturday 11 November 1865, page 1

A fire broke out on Friday on the premises of Mr. J. Whitcombe, in Rundle-street. About 6 o'clock Mrs. Hornabrook, of the York Hotel, observed smoke issuing from the roof of Mr. Whitcombe's shop. She at once gave the alarm to her husband, who repaired to the spot and rendered valuable assistance. Mr. A. J. Baker, the Superintendent of Fire Brigades, was promptly on the spot. Mr. George Barlow arrived in a short time with the hose reel, but some difficulty was experienced in getting the men usually attached to the reel, who had just left work. As soon as practicable, however, the hose was passed in at the upper window, and a large body of water was thrown on to the burning timbers in the roof of the workshop, and in a brief period the fire was entirely subdued. Mr. Whitcombe had lighted a fire in the fireplace to boil some glue, but when he closed the place at half past 5 o'clock he did not see any sparks of fire or ignited embers. It is thought probable, however, that a spark was driven from the fireplace into some veneering wood and seasoned timber, whence the fire spread. Fortunately the roof was of iron, but had it been otherwise we should doubtless have had to record a disastrous conflagration. Great praise is due to the neighbors, who were very prompt in their attendance and rendered much assistance in extinguishing the fire. Mr. Whitcombe's premises are, we believe, insured. The family were washed out by the body of water which was poured into the house, and they were kindly received by Mr. and Mrs. Dodgson.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Tuesday 21 November 1865, page 2

Alarm of Fire.— Some alarm was occasioned on Monday afternoon in King William-street by the issuing of dense volumes of smoke from the block of buildings opposite the Napoleon

Bona-parte Hotel. It was soon found that the chimney of Mr. Way's office had caught fire. Mr. A. J. Baker was quickly on the spot, and some time afterwards one or two members of the old fire brigade came up from Mr. Carvosso's yard, bringing with them a reel. A good deal of difficulty was experienced in getting the water to bear on the fire. Ultimately a ladder was obtained, and water was drawn up in buckets, by which means the flames were speedily extinguished.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Friday 24 November 1865, page 2

Fire in Gawler-Place. — Considerable alarm was created among the residents in Gawler-place and its vicinity on Thursday afternoon by the breaking out of a fire in Mr. G. P. Harris's extensive ironmongery store. It was found to be confined to a zinc loft over a building used for storing iron at the further end of the yard. A workman in Mr. Harris's employ first discovered it at about half-past 4 o'clock. An alarm was raised, and active measures were at once taken to prevent the spreading of the flames. The whole force of the establishment turned out and formed a line, by means of which buckets of water were rapidly passed on to the scene of the conflagration. Strict orders were issued to keep the door of the loft closed. In about ten minutes after the first alarm Mr. A. J. Baker, the Superintendent of the Fire Brigade, arrived on the spot, and some minutes afterwards two reels and the necessary apparatus made their appearance almost simultaneously —one from Mr. Carvosso's yard, and the other from Mr. Barlow's. The reels were joined, and Mr. Barlow's stand-pipe and the connecting-rod were fixed to the fireplug. A continuous stream was then brought to bear on the fire, which after some time was totally extinguished. It is supposed to have originated from spontaneous combustion, as the loft contained a large quantity of loose straw and cotton-waste. An inquest will probably be held to-day.