

Adelaide Fire Brigade Equipment Locations 1879

From the Sands and McDougall Directory for 1879.

Inspector of Police, Paul Foelsche.
Commander "Flying Cloud," H. R. Marsh.

THE ADELAIDE FIRE INSURERS' ASSOCIATION (LIMITED), FIRE BRIGADES, S.A.

Superintendent, Arthur John Baker, Hutt street, Adelaide. Absent on leave.
Acting Superintendent, Samuel Higgs, Hutt street, Adelaide.

ADELAIDE FIRE BRIGADE.

No. 1. Horse Cart Reel, with hose and all necessary implements, Grenfell street east. Richard Spencer, foreman.
No. 2. Horse Cart Reel, with hose and all necessary implements, Hindley street west. James Wedlock, foreman.
No. 3. Hand Reel, hose, &c., complete, King William street south. A. Holland, foreman.
No. 4. Hand Reel, hose, &c., complete, Archer street, North Adelaide. William Smith, foreman.
No. 5. Government Hand Reel, hose, &c., complete, at the rear of Post-Office, King William street.
No. 7. Hand Reel, hose, &c., complete. Fisher place, off Rundle street, Wills & Co.'s, W. Hendry, foreman.
Government Hand Reel, hose, &c., complete, at Government House, North terrace, for private use in case of fire.

A Government Hand Reel, hose, &c., complete, at the Railway Station, North terrace.

GLENELG FIRE BRIGADE.

No. 8. Hand Reel, 250 feet delivery hose, standpipe, keys, &c., complete, Miller's Corner. James Liddle, foreman.

GAWLER TOWN FIRE BRIGADE.

No. 9. Horse Reel, with suction and delivery hose-pipes, ladders, and all necessary implements for working a small fire-engine, stationed at Corporation Acre, Lyndoch road. Richard Morris, foreman.

PORTLAND ESTATE FIRE BRIGADE.

No. 10. Hand Reel, delivery hose, standpipe, keys, &c., complete. J. C. Walker, foreman.

GLANVILLE.

No. 11. Hand Reel, delivery hose, standpipe, keys, &c., complete, Carlisle street. H. Knowles, foreman.

PORT ADELAIDE FIRE BRIGADE.

Deputy Superintendent, Thos. Sanders, Waterworks Yard.
No. 1. Hand Reel, complete, at the Waterworks Yard. W. Laphorn, foreman.
No. 2. Hand Reel, complete, St. Anthony street. F. Appleby, foreman.
No. 3. Hand Reel, complete, Port Railway Station. Railway Porters.
No. 4. Hand Reel, complete, Mr. A. Hall's store, Levi's Wharf.

Locations of Fire Reels



Christian Colonist (SA : 1878 - 1894), Friday 3 January 1879, page 1

EPITOME OF GENERAL NEWS.

A fire, which might have been very disastrous, occurred on Saturday evening last in the window of W. C. Rigby's establishment in King William-street, but was promptly extinguished by the assistants, one of whom had his hand severely burned. A good deal of damage was done.

South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Monday 6 January 1879, page 4

MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 1879

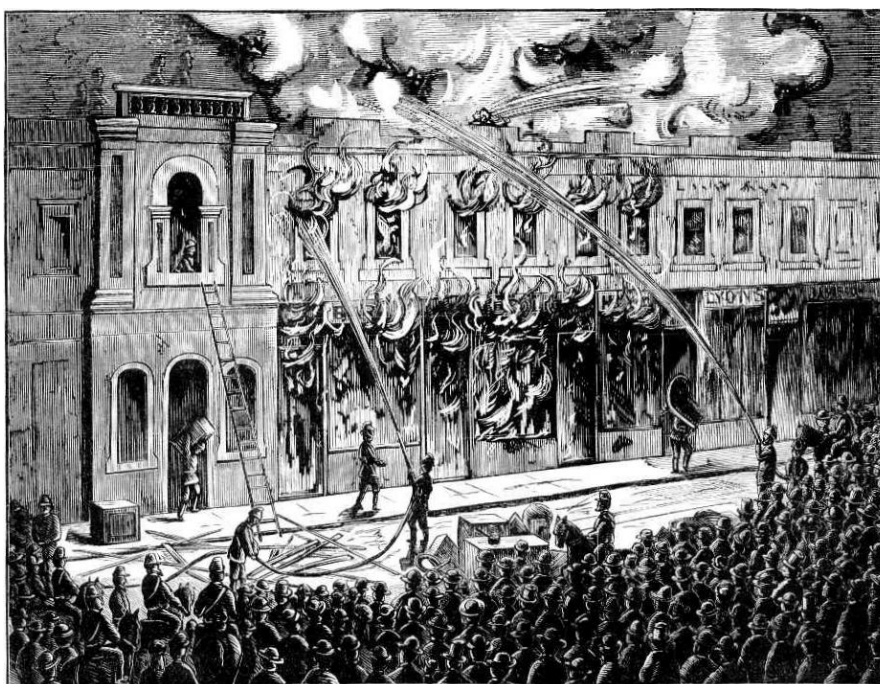
On Saturday evening, January 4, a fire broke out in Messrs. Hill & Co,'s stables, near the National Hotel, Pirie-street. The yard was locked up safely and left about 8 o'clock, and shortly before 10 flames were seen to be issuing from the roof of a shed in which there were a number of horses and cows. No. 1 reel was soon on the spot, and the fire was subdued before much damage had been done. Mr. S. Higgs, the Acting-Superintendent of Fire Brigades, was present. The origin of the fire has not been ascertained, but it is thought to be the work of an incendiary or some straggler who had got into one of the mangers to sleep.

Adelaide Observer (SA : 1843 - 1904), Saturday 11 January 1879, page 7

FIRE IN KING WILLIAM-STREET.

At about 3 o'clock on Thursday afternoon a fire occurred at Mr. Hugo Fischer's tobacconist's shop, at the corner of King William and Grenfell streets. It broke out in the south-eastern corner of the place, underneath the staircase leading to Mr. Manning's photographic studio overhead, and fortunately was confined to that spot. Within seven or eight minutes of the alarm being given No. 7 reel (Hendry's) and the Acting-Superintendent of Fire Brigades (Mr. S.Higgs) arrived, and mainly by their exertions the fire was got under in about a quarter of an hour, there being no need for the services of No. 2 reel (Wed-lock's) and No. 3 reel (Holland's), which came up soon after. The stock of the shop, which was insured in the South British insurance Office for £200, was but very little damaged by the fire, but the injury to it caused by the water will probably amount to considerably above half that sum. The carpeting of the stairs of Mr. Manning's establishment was damaged by the water, which penetrated through the partition, and the smoke made its way through his floor, but beyond this no harm was done to the premises. A crowd speedily assembled, and a number of police were almost as quickly in attendance, who preserved order. Next day the City Coroner held an inquest, when the Jury returned an open verdict.

Illustrated Adelaide News (SA : 1875 - 1880), Saturday 1 February 1879, page 1



GREAT FIRE IN RUNDLE-STREET. DESTRUCTION OF THREE SHOPS AND OTHER PROPERTY

Illustrated Adelaide News (SA : 1875 - 1880), Saturday 1 February 1879, page 3

our Illustrations

GREAT FIRE IN RUNDLE-STREET. [Page 1.]

For the size of the city Adelaide has been comparatively free from the "fire demon" for a very long time. The hot weather of the past week has however brought with it a larger number of fires than has ever occurred during a like period since the colony has existed. The subject of our illustration was the largest fire we have ever had here. It began soon after 9 o'clock on the evening of February 5th, and before it was got under (at about 11 o'clock) no fewer than three shops and premises were completely gutted. The names of the persons whose premises were entirely destroyed were L. Veroli (insured), Mr. Barry (not insured), Mr. Haylock (not insured). Besides these the adjoining premises of Messrs. Jamieson, Lyons, and the E.S. & A.C. Bank, were all considerably damaged both by fire and water. We believe that fully £10,000 worth of damage was done. The thoroughfare was completely blockaded for several hours by a mass of people, and there could not have been less than 10,000 persons present. A great part of the salvage goods were stolen, whilst the furniture and personal effects were more damaged by being tumbled about the streets than by any other cause. Mr. Richard Vaughan is the proprietor of the whole of the buildings, but we believe he will not lose anything, being fully insured. At the inquest nothing was elicited to show how the fire originated, and we suppose it will therefore for ever remain a mystery. Besides the large fire, there has been several others during the past few days, at the King of Hanover stables, at Kent Town, in Hindley-street, and lastly at the Adelaide Photo-graphic Company's in King William-street. Altogether, Adelaide has had enough fires to last a long time, and we sincerely hope it will be a long time ere we have to chronicle so disastrous a fire as is depicted on our front page. It is from a sketch taken on the spot.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Thursday 13 February 1879, page 3

FIRE IN KING WILLIAM-STREET.

Shortly after 10 o'clock on Wednesday night, February 12, the citizens were roused from comparative lethargy to wild excitement, the cause being a large fire which broke out in King William-street in the Adelaide Photographic Company's establishment. This fire following so quickly after the Rundle-street blaze, and occurring in a block of buildings sufficiently close to each other to promise abundant food for morbid curiosity, induced a very large number of per-sons to turn out, and within a few moments after the alarm had been given King William-street was crowded by an excited throng of spectators. Traffic for the time was suspended, and beyond a subdued murmur from the crowd nothing was heard but the sharp crackling of the flames, as they eagerly licked the windows and roofs of the buildings, throwing ruddy reflections on the spectators, and the short, sharp orders given by the cool Acting-Superintendent (Mr. Higgs) to the willing firemen under his charge. The fire was first noticed a few moments after 10 o'clock, its presence being indicated by the flames shooting up from the roof of the Photo-graphic Company's establishment. Considerable difference of opinion as to the period of the arrival of the first reel exists. There were varying statements, but of course it is difficult for the firemen in charge of each reel to say positively the period at which they reached the ground, and with every desire to be truthful they might be incorrect as to their priority or otherwise. From what we could learn No. 7 (Hendry's) was

the first to get into King William-street and play upon the fire. There was not sufficient pressure at the commencement, and the stream of water could not reach the roof, but in a few minutes the pressure increased and the antagonistic element soon checked the progress of the flames. In the meantime several other reels arrived, and under the Acting-Superintendent's directions played upon the fire. The hose of No. 2 reel (Wedlock's) was connected with a plug in Gresham-street, and taken over the roof at the rear of the Exchange Hotel into the back of the burning premises. No. 3 (Holland's) was stationed in Hindley-street, near the Exchange Hotel, the hose being taken along the passage between the hotel and Bermingham's and over the roofs to play upon the fire at the back; and No. 1 reel was stationed opposite Faulding's, in Rundle-street, the hose being available for the fire. As most of our readers are aware the Photo-graphic Company's establishment—in which it may be mentioned en passanti a fire occurred some eight years since—is flanked on the south by the shop of Mr. J. Clark, tailor, Mr. T. J. Hannam, fruiterer, having the next shop, and in the north by Messrs. Townsend, Botting, and Co.'s auction room. The efforts of the firemen were directed primarily to subduing the main body of the flames, and secondarily to well drenching the walls and roofs of the adjoining premises, so as to prevent their catching fire. It speaks well for the way the Brigade were directed and worked that within 40 minutes of their commencing operations the fire was practically extinguished. The flames shortly after being first observed communicated themselves to the storey above Mr. Clark's shop, and which storey is also, we believe, part of the Photo-graphic Company's establishment. The occupiers of Mr. Hannam's shop soon after the blaze was noticed commenced throwing out their goods, and a heap of bedding and furniture was speedily collected on the footpath. Later on these, things were taken indoors. Fortunately the flames were subdued before they obtained a hold on other buildings. Had they remained long unchecked, however, or had there been any breeze, the consequences to the block of buildings from Hindley-street to the terrace would doubt-less have been very serious, Then damage by water, especially in Mr, Clark's case; will be as great if not greater than that caused by fire, but we understand that the stock is insured. As to the other buildings' damage we could learn nothing reliable with respect to insurance. There is little doubt, however, that the buildings at least are insured. The police arrangements were very good. The Commissioner of Police and Superintendent of Foot Police were in attendance, and there were over 30 constables on the ground, including mounted and foot, in addition to several sergeants and corporals. A few detectives were also present and kept a close eye upon one or two suspicious looking individuals who manifested a hankering to help to save property. An inquest is to be held to ascertain if possible the cause of the fire.

Adelaide Observer (SA : 1843 - 1904), Saturday 15 February 1879, page 12

ANOTHER FIRE IN RUNDLE-STREET.

An alarm of "Fire" in Rundle-street was raised about 9.30 on Saturday night, February 8, and with the fresh recollection of the recent disastrous conflagration in the same thorough-fare proved sufficiently startling to the residents. The fire it was found had broken out in a stable at the back of the King of Hanover Hotel, and about four tons of hay were destroyed before the flames could be arrested. It appears that the smoke was first seen by several persons, who gave the alarm; and Corporal Lynch, who was on duty in the street, reported to the police station. Assistance was soon at hand. No. 7 Reel (Hendry's) was first on the spot, followed by Nos. 1 (Powditch's) and 2 (Wedlock's), and with Wills & Co.'s reel also playing vigorously on the flames and fortunately succeeded in preventing their spreading to the

adjacent buildings. Mr. Vosz's establishment was in some jeopardy, and so were Wills & Co.'s, their places not being at a great distance from the burning stable. The Acting-Superintendent of Fire Brigades and his men, as well as a number of mounted and foot police, attended, and the constables rendered good service in keeping back the crowd, which was naturally a very large one, it being Saturday night, when the streets are thronged. Five horses which were in the stable at the time it caught fire were with difficulty rescued, and one was severely scorched. The property belongs to Mrs. Augusta Weidenbach, and is insured in the Equitable Insurance Company. An enquiry was held by the City Coroner on Monday, and the Jury found that "There is no evidence to show how the fire originated."

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Monday 17 February 1879, page 2

GENERAL NEWS.

About half-past 11 o'clock this morning the cry of "Another fire" was heard in King William-street, whilst thick clouds of smoke were to be seen drifting over the buildings north of the Bank of South Australia, which caused numbers of persons to make a rush in the direction of the supposed conflagration. The alarm to some extent was a false one, as the smoke was found to issue from a chimney, the soot in which had caught fire and was soon extinguished.

South Australian Chronicle and Weekly Mail (Adelaide, SA : 1868 - 1881), Saturday 22 February 1879, page 8

FIRE IN KING WILLIAM STREET.

On Saturday morning, February 15, Mr. T. Ward, J.P., City Coroner, held an inquest in the offices of the Equitable Building Society, Hindley-street, into the circumstances attending the fire that occurred on the premises of the Adelaide Photographic Company on Wednesday evening, February 12. Mr. J. Allen was chosen Foreman of the Jury. Mr. S. Higgs represented the Insurance Companies generally, Mr. Abrahams appeared on behalf of the Equitable Insurance Company, Mr. T. E. Bury for the Colonial Mutual Insurance Company, and Mr. Dashwood watched the proceedings for the Photographic Company. Mary Jane Davis, widow of the late Henry Davis, of King William-street, photographer, deposed that she was now carrying on her husband's business, known as the Adelaide Photographic Company. Mr. Francis, the operator, Miss Morcom, an apprentice, and a lad named Ernest Zeigler were the only persons employed on the premises. There was a fire on the same premises eight years ago last November. Witness left the shop about 5 o'clock on Wednesday afternoon, February 12, and was in the operating room about an hour previously. When she left the shop the operator, Ziegler, and a lady who was having her child's photograph taken were in the shop. Witness did not return to the premises after leaving on Wednesday evening. Ziegler closed the front door of the shutters with a bar and padlock, and had the custody of the key. There was only one key to the padlock. Formerly there were two keys for the back-door lock but about six weeks ago one was lost, since which time witness had had the custody of the remaining key. She had frequently returned to the building at night after it had been closed. No one borrowed the key on Wednesday night last till after the fire. Witness was insured for £500 in the Colonial Mutual Office, and for £650 in the Imperial Office. The policies in both cases covered the stock-in-trade, furniture, and negatives. About two or three months ago she affected the additional insurance in the Colonial Mutual for £500. Witness knew nothing about the chemicals in the operating room. She had to attend to the financial position of the business. Mr. Blakensy first informed her of the fire, but Mr.

Hurst came to her house in Pulteney-street and asked for the key, as he wanted to save all that he could. Mr. Francis was a very steady and careful man. Witness had no idea how the fire occurred. By Mr. Higgs— I think that I must have lost the missing key of the back door. Previously before closing the front door the back-door key was hung up in the room. Ziegler has been in my husband's and my employ altogether about two years. By Mr. Dashwood— When the premises were burned down about eight years ago the insurance policy had run out three days. When I came into the business the premises were insured for £1,500, but I reduced that policy to £1,150. By the Foreman— The stock on the premises at the time of the fire was as great as when they were insured for £1,500. By Detective Doyle — The back door was not opened for several days before the fire. Arthur Francis, photographic operator, in the employ of Mrs. Davis, said he had full charge of all work in the operating room. He left the premises by the front door about 5 o'clock on Wednesday evening, February 12. Mrs. Davis and the two assistants were in the shop at the time. When he left the operating room no gas-jets were burning. It was the duty of the apprentice to turn off the gas at the meter. There was no rubbish on the floors. Only patent safety matches were used on the premises. Witness smoked in the operating room during Wednesday afternoon without any cover to his pipe. The partitions of the rooms up stairs were made of canvas, except that of the dark room, which was of matchboard. Amongst the chemicals were a pound of collodion, about a half a pint of spirits of wine, and half a pint of spirit varnish. There were no other inflammable chemicals used. The chemicals were not explosive in the state that they were kept on the premises, but they would all take fire if a light were applied to them. Did not think that the excessive heat of the late hot weather had caused the collodion to take fire. He had never seen a candle used in the place. They used a gas burner which was connected by a gutta-percha pipe. The tube would not reach to the partitions. From his experience he did not think that a photographer's operating room was more likely to take fire than a public-house bar. He had been with Mrs. Davies since September 9, and had never conversed with her about the insurance. Witness lived at Glenelg, and went there on Wednesday evening by the 5.15 train. Never heard of Mrs. Davies or the assistants returning to work at night. He had no idea as to what caused the fire. By the Jury — Did not use large quantities of rags for wiping up. I might have been smoking half an hour before I left the premises. There was no communication with Mr. Clark's premises, but there was a communication with the greengrocer's shop overhead, which consisted of an "arch" made of boards. By Mr. Higgs — The dark room was separated from the operating room by a matchboard partition. There was no gas in the dark room. Had never worked after 5 o'clock. The printing room was divided from the operating room by a canvas partition. The guttapercha gas-tubing was about three feet in length. That was the only jet used in the hot weather. There was another jet in the printing room which had not been used. Had never noticed an extra pressure in the gas during the latter part of the day. The gas was seldom used in the afternoon. It was not his duty to turn it off. The chemicals were kept in stoppered bottles, and the collodion had a glass cap as well. If through an accident the bottles became broken spontaneous combustion would not occur. Never noticed any rats or mice in the place. Sulphate of iron and carbonate of soda were kept on a shelf on the partition. The collodion was kept in the sink in the dark room. The waste cotton was kept in the workroom near the spirits of wine. Nothing could have fallen on to the chemicals. By the Coroner — I have been 14 years in the profession. During that time I believe I have not heard of spontaneous combustion arising from ammonia being kept in bottles. There was a little liquid ammonia on the premises which was not inflammable. (The Coroner here read a

telegram which had appeared in one of the daily papers, stating that "owing to the spontaneous combustion of some chemicals in the photographic department at the Government Printing-Office, Sydney a fire had occurred in that building." The Coroner pointed out that from the telegram it would appear that spontaneous combustion was likely to arise from photographers' chemicals. The witness, Mr. Francis, explained that at Sydney they might manufacture their own chemicals, which would make all the difference. By Mr. Dashwood—I lighted my pipe with the safety matches and sometimes smoked in all the rooms. I considered the patent safety matches rather dangerous. I did not leave my pipe on the premises. There were not many scraps about. The stock of chemicals was very small. Elizabeth Jane Morcom said she was employed by Mrs. Davies as general assistant. Matches were not used in the business more than once or twice per day. Witness used the gas for burnishing the prints. The liquid ammonia was kept in the same room that witness worked in. When she lighted a match before throwing it away she was careful to see that the fire was all out. On the night of the fire she left the shop about 25 minutes to 6. Mrs. Davies had previously left. The boy, Ziegler, was the last on the premises. He was not mischievous. When she left the premises every thing appeared safe. The Operating room was very hot during the warm weather. Ziegler would sometimes smoke a cigarette upstairs. By Mr. Higgs— There was a gas-jet in the printer's dark room, which was not lighted in the hot weather. There was also gas in the toning room, which was lighted about every other day. There were two gas meters, one upstairs and the other downstairs. There were three water-taps on the premises. Two of the water-taps were turned off, but one was running when I went away. I never heard that Mrs. Davis's servant came to the shop after it was closed. It was not usual to cut off the water from the cellar. By Mr. Dashwood— There was no gas-jet in the operator's darkroom. When I left that room Mr. Francis was there, in addition to Mrs. Davis and Zeigler. The gas was escaping a little on Wednesday, and was noticed by Mr. Freeman and myself. The gas might have been lit after I left the operating room. I spoke to Zeigler, and he turned the gas off, and there was no further smell. Ernest Zeigler, photographer's printer, in the employ of Mrs. Davis, said he frequently used about a dozen of matches per day in his particular work. Generally put the matches out by squeezing them between his fingers before he threw them on the floor. Two or three days before Wednesday, February 12, the scraps on the floor had been cleared up. Witness had nothing to do with the chemicals. Had used them for purposes of study, but did not do so on the day of the fire. On a hot day the corks and stoppers would frequently fly out of the bottles of chemicals. Never had an accident with the chemicals. He sometimes smoked cigarettes during working hours. Mr. Freeman directed his attention to an escape of gas about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and he turned it off at the meter. Witness left the operating-room about 25 minutes to 6 o'clock. Just previously Mr. Clark complained of the water running into his premises, and witness went upstairs and shut it off. At that time all was safe. Two panes of glass in the window were broken and pasted up with paper, under which was a calico blind. By Mr. Higgs— When Mr. Clark complained of the water running into his place I went upstairs but could not stop the leak, but put two cloths under it. John Clark, of King William-street, tailor, deposed that he left his shop, which adjoined that of Mrs. Davis, about a quarter-past 6 o'clock on Wednesday evening, February 12. His foreman, Mr. Clarkson, remained in the shop finishing some work. Witness did not hear of the fire till next morning about 8 o'clock. The division between his workshop and Mrs. Davis's upstairs room was burnt through by the fire. The ceiling of his workshop had also fallen through in two places. The chief damage done to his stock was by water. He was insured for £550 in the Equitable Insurance Company, and

estimated the damage done to his goods by water at £300. Witness presumed that the bundle of woollen clips produced came from Mrs. Davis's upper rooms, where the fire broke out. By Mr. Dashwood — The woollen clips originally came from my shop. I was not in the habit of tying the cuttings in bundles similar to that produced. Goods have not been made of material like those in the bundle for at least eight months. I did not produce them as giving an explanation of the origin of the fire. They were not at all charred when I found them. By Mr. Botting— I estimate my loss at £300, but I do not know the value of the stock damaged. I am of opinion that my stock is damaged to the extent of 33 1/3 per cent. I have frequently complained to Mrs. Davis that the water was coming into my premises, but did not do so on Wednesday, February 12. James Dixon Clarkson, tailor, in the employ of Mr. J. Clark, said he left the workshop about five minutes to 7 o'clock on Wednesday evening, February 12. At that time there was nothing to indicate fire. If he wanted to set a house on fire he would use something better than the bundle of woollen rags produced, which would not burn unless previously soaked in kerosine. He did not believe that they were used for any improper purpose. Some one from Mr. Clark's shop went into Mrs. Davis's to complain of water coming into the workshop on Wednesday afternoon. Ernest Zeigler, recalled, said he never saw the bundle of chips produced on Mrs. Davis's premises. Elizabeth Jane Morcom gave similar evidence. Mrs. Davis, recalled, said she would not have insured for the extra £500 unless she had been so induced by Mr. Hurst, the insurance agent. She had never seen the bundle of rags produced before. Stock was taken once a year. According to the stock-sheets produced, the stock was worth nearly £1,600 during last December. Had made arrangements with Messrs. Townsend and Co. to sell the business by auction on Wednesday, February 19. Eliza Linten, single woman, in the employ of Mrs. Hannen, of King William-street, said she slept in one of the top rooms of the house adjoining Mrs. Davis's. She went to bed about 10 o'clock, but was called up when the adjoining premises were discovered to be on fire. There were four little children sleeping in the same room with witness. As she was leaving the room the flames broke through the partition. By Mr. Higgs— I had been in bed about 20 minutes when I was called up. Never heard any noise in the photographer's premises. William Love, boots at the Exchange Hotel, said he saw the fire between 15 and 20 minutes past 10 o'clock on Wednesday night, February 12, and gave the alarm. At the time the flames were bursting out of the back windows. Witness assisted at No. 2 hose, and played a small hose on the hotel roof to extinguish the sparks falling on it. Geo. John Freeman, of Rundle-street, photographer, said he called at Mrs. Davis's establishment about half-past 2 o'clock on February 12, to complete the purchase of some negatives, and noticed while going up stairs that there was a very great escape of gas. On February 5 he paid Mrs. Davis £14. 10s. for negatives purchased from her. Prior to Mr. Davis's death he had tried to negotiate for the same negatives. The chemicals used in photography are not subject to spontaneous combustion. James Hirst, insurance agent and surveyor to the Colonial Mutual Insurance Company, corroborated the evidence of Mrs. Davis as to having persuaded her to increase her insurance by £500. The insurance policy, commenced on December 2, 1878. When he went to see her at her house on the evening of the fire she fainted. Henry Ware Blakeney, residing at Mrs. Davis's house in Pulteney-street, said Mrs. Davis went home about half-past 5 o'clock on Wednesday evening, February 12, and remained at home all the evening, and retired about half-past 9 o'clock. Witness was the first who gave Mrs. Davis information of the fire. The Coroner, in reviewing the evidence, expressed the conviction that the Jury would not be able to arrive at a satisfactory explanation of the origin of the fire. Was it likely that the chemicals used in the business had

set fire to the buildings? The professional evidence went to show that such was not the explanation of the cause of the fire. The upper buildings of the burned premises were constructed in a very flimsy way, as in addition to the walls being of matchwood and canvas there was a passage by which the flames could be swept right through over the roofs of the adjoining buildings. It was really time that something was done to put a stop to the use of such flimsy materials in the partitions of houses. Mr. Clark had introduced another element into the enquiry in the shape of a bundle of woollen clippings which he (the Coroner) thought would be more likely to put a fire out than to cause one. Mrs. Davis's explanation for increasing her insurance a short time before the fire was quite consistent, and had been supported by Mr. Hurst, the insurance agent. He (the Coroner) thought that all workshops in Adelaide should be regularly inspected by an appointed official who should see that shavings and other inflammable substances were not allowed to accumulate on the floor. The Jury, after a brief retirement, returned a verdict that there was nothing to show how the fire occurred on Mr. Davis's premises on Wednesday night February 12. They desired how-ever, to call the attention of the authorities to the urgent necessity for stringent regulations being enforced with regard to the building of tenements within the city, as the practise of using frail and inflammable material for partitions, walls, and open ceilings now in vogue was, in the opinion of the Jury, most reprehensible.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Thursday 27 February 1879, page 2

GENERAL NEWS.

On Wednesday evening, February 26, another fire was added to the somewhat long list of conflagrations which have taken place in the city during the last month. About mid-night a cry of fire was raised in Rundle-street, and the few persons whose business or inclination kept them in the street at that hour soon collected in front of the Melbourne Photographic Company's studio, from whence volumes of smoke could be seen issuing. The flames, although at first invisible to persons in the street, must have made rapid progress, as they very quickly made their appearance through the front windows of the studio over Mr. Park's shop, and raged unchecked for some time until No. 7 Reel turned up at about 20 minutes past 12 o'clock.

No. 3 Reel was also soon on the spot, and a stream of water was brought to bear, which drove the flames from the front of the building. They seemed then to make some headway by spreading along the studio towards the back premises, but on the arrival of Reels 2 and 1 and Superintendent Higgs, the fire was successfully contended with and subdued by a quarter to 1 o'clock. Some fears were entertained that the fire would spread to the adjoining premises occupied by Messrs. Donaldson, Andrews, & Sharland, but these were happily soon set at rest by the exertions of the firemen and several willing helpers. The fire has made Mr Freeman's studio the principal scene of its depredations, as it was confined to the upper story of the building. The shops on the ground floor are occupied by Mr. C. Parks, confectioner and baker, Mr. H. Selige, jeweller, and Mr. J. McKirdy, seedsman, and although the flames did not extend to their premises, the shops of the two former were deluged with the water used to subdue the fire. The fire in its course upstairs did a great deal of damage by consuming a large amount of valuable property in the studio. In addition to the furniture and general effects, the whole of Mr. Freeman's negatives, which he values at about £500, were entirely destroyed. Downstairs the water has done almost as much if not more damage than the conflicting element has above. In Mr. Parks's shop but a very small quantity of his

perishable stock is saved, and in Mr. Selige's shop, so far as can yet be ascertained, much valuable stock is damaged if not destroyed. Mr. McKirdy's shop was, on account of the limited extent of the fire, exempted from any thing like serious damage. From an examination of the premises it, would appear that the fire started somewhere near the workroom in the upper story, but Mr. Freeman states as his opinion that it originated under the staircase in Mr. Parks's shop. The staircase was burnt, but there was nothing beyond this to suggest that the fire commenced there. Mr. Freeman left his premises all right at 6 o'clock on Wednesday evening, and cannot account for the fire. The chemicals fortunately escaped, thus there can be no room for the suggestion that they originated the fire. Mr. Freeman is insured for £800 in the South Australian Office and for £300 in the Royal Office. Inspector Searcy and a body of troopers and several constables were in attendance during the progress of the conflagration.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Monday 3 March 1879, page 2

GENERAL NEWS.

The City Coroner is now holding an enquiry at the office of the Permanent Equitable Building Society into the circumstances of the fire which occurred on the premises of Mr. Freeman, photographer, Rundle-street, on February 27.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Tuesday 4 March 1879, page 6

CORONER'S INQUEST

THE FIRE AT FREEMAN'S PHOTOGRAPHIC PREMISES.

On Monday morning, March 3, the City Coroner (Mr. T. Ward. J. P.) held an inquest in Mr. Hewer's office, Hindley-street, on the late fire at Freeman's photographic establishment, Rundle-street. Mr. Joseph John Green was Foreman of the Jury. Mr. R. E. Tapley attended to watch the proceedings for the South Australian Insurance Company ; Mr. S. Higgs, Superintendent of Fire Brigades, was also present. The Coroner, in opening the proceedings, commented upon the number of serious fires which had occurred in the city recently, and pointed out that it was necessary to make the most complete investigation in such cases, as not only was a large amount of valuable property destroyed but human lives were jeopardised. He had held no less than twelve enquiries into fires during the last month. In three recent fires especially there had been serious risk to human life, and it was only by prompt action that fatal results had been averted. He therefore wished to impress upon the Jury the very important nature of enquiries touching fires and the necessity for the fullest investigation. George John Freeman, photographer, deposed that on the evening of February 26 he left his photographic rooms at 5.55, with his employés, and all came downstairs together. No one was left in the place. Witness took one key, and William Smith, an apprentice, had the other. There was no other entrance than the front. Went home, and did not come into town until sent for that night. A cab came for him about 1 a.m. Witness was not in bed ; he had gone to sleep over the newspaper. Was told that his premises were on fire and went in the cab to the shop. The fire was nearly out when he arrived. Had been insured in the South Australian Insurance Company for about £800 for seven years ; and in the Royal for a shorter period for £350. The South Australian covered photographic apparatus and furniture, and the Royal the stock-in-trade. The negatives were not insured. Could not estimate the loss by the fire. Dissolved partnership with Mr. Wivell last December. Mr. Wivell had no direct interest in the business at present. He held a bill of sale over the

premises but witness always paid up in advance. Witness was a heavy loser by the fire. Could not speak as to the origin of the fire, but surmised that it started under the staircase. The only division between Park's, the confectioner's premises, and witness's staircase was a partition of matchboards on a level with witness's floor. On the boarding was a small trap-door which was put in at the request of Mr. Muller, the tenant preceding Park's, for the purpose of creating a current of air for ventilation. A lathe had been standing on the trap-door for four years past. Over the staircase a kind of workroom was established. There were several calico and paper divisions in the establishment. Had no disagreement with Mr. Parks, and was on good terms with the workmen and neighbours. Decidedly considered that he would be a heavy loser by the fire, and not a gainer. Over the staircase were a number of empty bottles, a sack of cork bark, a small piece of matting, and other things— it was a kind of store. No chemicals were kept there. Had no naphtha on the premises. No chemicals were kept in the printing room. In the burnishing room the heat required for the burnishers was never more than that of an ordinary flatiron. After Mrs. Davis' fire, altered the burnishers so as to guard against fire. Could give no opinion, but surmised that the fire started under the staircase adjoining Mr. Parks' premises. Kept the collodion in the dark room, but that room had not been touched by the fire. Had no gun cotton on the premises. Did not make his own collodion. Had a large bottle of spirit varnish in the front room. Had no chemicals or spirits between the burnishing table and the back window. Believed he did not smoke on that day, because he was very unwell. Two of the employes, James Bell and Scanlon smoked, but he prohibited their doing so on the premises. The day before the fire the whole of the rooms were cleared and swept up in anticipation of the Show week. Not more than two or three matches were lit per day on the premises. Was very little in the place that day being engaged at the Show. Had a number of pictures at the Show — twelve large frames and two small ones. Believed they were insured. The only grounds for fancying that the fire took place under the staircase were on account of Parks' coffee-stand he believed to be there. Had no idea where the fire could have started on his own premises. Should say it originated some where near the staircase if it did occur on the premises. The lad Smith used to turn the gas off at 6 o'clock, and it was his duty to go back and turn the water off at 9 p.m. He said he did not go back on the night of the fire. Smith was a very steady good lad. There were only two or three days' silver cuttings — about a pound — in a bag which was hung on one of the back partitions. By the Jury — It was necessary to let the water run for some hours in order to clear the prints. There were gaspipes leading under the burnishing table. The gas came from the ceiling direct. Did not think there were any rats on the premises there were plenty of mice. Could not say whether Parks used the coffee apparatus under the staircase. Was very particular about the gas being turned off. By Mr. Higgs— The large north shutter was opened every day and fastened every night. Never noticed any sparks playing from the bakery on the window. Parks' bakery extended at the back and there was a long flue over Donaldson, Andrews, & Sharland's. Had never heard of Parks' premises being considered dangerous. There was only part of a box of matches (patent safety) on the premises. Witness here made an explanation to the effect that on the inquest at Mrs. Davis' fire he stated that he had no gun cotton on the premises, believing that he had none, but now he wished to say that he had found about a drachm of it since, and exploded it to prevent futurerisk. James Bell, operator in Mr. Freeman's establishment, corroborated as to the time of leaving the premises, and gave it as his opinion that the fire started on the stairs below from Parks', but had no particular reason for thinking so. There was nothing on the premises to cause a fire. He knew of no accidental blaze in Parks'. The front legs of the table stood on the trap door,

and it was fixed by nails to the wall. Witness smoked, but did not usually go about with his pipe in his mouth. He did not smoke when at work. Did not think any chemicals that would ignite had been used on the day of the fire. About a dozen boxes of tandstickors were usually kept in a tin box, but there were none on the premises that day, as he could not find any when he required some. He ultimately found about a quarter of a box of safety matches. Never got a fresh stock of matches until run out of them. Varnished on a different bench to the burnisher, but in the same room. If the varnish came in contact with the burnisher it might explode if the burnisher were alight. By a Juror — Believed the trapdoor was burnt, and a portion of the stairs round it also. By Mr. Higgs — Had seen sparks coming from Parks' chimney, but none from the bakehouse. Frederic John Scanlan, in the employ of Mr. Freeman, gave evidence mainly corroborative, and added that when he left with the others in the evening he smelt nothing like a fire. Had no idea of the cause of the fire, but his opinion was that it did not start in Freeman's place, because no fire was used in the premises from about 3.30 p m., the gas being put out. The afternoon's work consisted of toning photos and taking portraits. Smoked in the afternoon. Was sure he did not light his pipe before he left the room, and did not believe the others did. When matches were used they were generally thrown down. It was possible that sparks might be carried from Parks's chimney through the open window if a north wind were blowing, but he had not noticed any. Captain J. H. Biggs deposed that as an amateur he had made photography his study for some years. The clippings of photographic prints referred to in the enquiry were composed of albumenized paper, sensitized with nitrate of silver, sometimes fumed with ammonia, toned with chloride of gold, and fixed by immersion in a solution of hyposulphate of soda. Such clippings were liable to spontaneous combustion, according to the editor of the Photographic News. Could not say how long after the packing together of the clippings combustion would arise. Knew of no other chemicals used by photographers liable to spontaneous combustion. The only one he could think of was gun-cotton. He had mentioned to some photographers the fact of the clippings being liable to spontaneous combustion. By the Foreman — Considered the heat of the weather would accelerate the action of most chemicals. Did not understand the chemical action by which fire was produced — whether by damp or heat. Should think half a pound of the clippings would be sufficient to create the combustion. Mr. Freeman, recalled, said there were on his premises on the day of the fire clippings containing the chemicals mentioned by Captain Biggs except the hyposulphate of soda. Had about half a pound or perhaps a pound in a bag hung up. The clippings were generally sent down to Mr. Forwood, at the Port, to be reduced to silver. Had never heard that the clippings were liable to spontaneous combustion. The clippings could not have been there eight or nine days. There was a door between the bag of clippings and the trap. Mr. Bell (recalled) corroborated, adding that he did not know that the clippings were liable to spontaneous combustion. Mr. Scanlon (recalled) said the clippings were not liable to spontaneous combustion, because they had not been subjected to chloride of gold or hyposulphate of soda. The less chemicals in them, the less liability to ignition. Had treated the clippings in various ways, and sometimes packed them tightly in a box, but never saw anything arise from them. Had kept clippings for more than six months at Dobson's, and no harm resulted. The clippings before being sent to the refiners were sometimes burnt to ashes, but burnt very slowly, the nitrate of silver having apparently the effect of retarding combustion. William Thomas Smith, apprentice to Mr. Freeman, said he was at the printing table on the day of the fire, and had nothing inflammable but paper. There were three or four handfuls of clippings, which he put away in the bag. After leaving with Mr. Freeman did

not return to the premises before the fire. Had been in the habit of returning to shut off the water, but lately had turned the water low. There were no matches about. Could not speak as to the origin of the fire. The bag of clippings was hung some five or six feet from the trapdoor. Was told of the fire by William Farmer, and went to the place. Tried to save the negatives, but the fire was too strong. Went in a cab to North Adelaide for Mr. Freeman, and returned with him to the fire. Mr. Free-man said the fire would be a terrible loss to him on account of the Government order. By Detective Burchell— Was the first upstairs since the fire broke out. The fire seemed to have started in the printing room over Parks's, and was burning fiercely. Could not say whether the floor had burnt through. E. A. Symonds, assistant printer to Mr. Free-man, said he had been floating paper in the morning and mounting the prints. About 10 a.m. he lit the gas to make the paste in a new pannican. There was nothing on the bottom of the pannican to which fire could adhere. It was put in cold water to get the paste out. Had not smoked for the last three weeks. Lit a match to ignite the gas, threw it on the floor and trod on it. Everything seemed quite safe when he left with the others. The large window was opened every day and all day. Sparks might fly in from the pastrycook's chimney. Had not seen any. Charles Parks, baker and confectioner, said he occupied a shop under the Melbourne Photographic Company's Rooms, and had part of a staircase leading from his pantry into the Photographic Company's rooms. Had no access to those rooms. There was no trapdoor to his knowledge. A floor divided his premises from the Photographic Company's rooms. Put some old teapots and bottles on the stairs, but never stowed away any inflammable lumber there. Was on first-rate terms with Mr. Freeman. Left the shop about 8.30 p.m. on the 26th, and did not return till next day. Was insured for £500 in the South Australian Insurance Company. Had no idea of the origin of the fire, and did not think it started on his premises. Had not made coffee in the pantry by gas or otherwise for three weeks because it had been so hot. Did not have his chimney on fire. Did not burn coal — only coke and charcoal. Had never seen sparks fly out of the chimney. Had the fire lighted as usual on Wednesday. Never noticed Mr. Freeman's window open by night. Edwin Parks, son of last witness, said he went to work in the bakehouse at 10 p.m. on the 26th, but had no fire. Went to bed at 10.45 p.m. in the room adjoining the shop. Had no gas, and used a candle. Had gas alight in the bakehouse. There were about half a dozen tea-pots on the stairs. The gas was not lighted in the pantry under the stairs. Did not know of a trapdoor. There was nothing inflammable on the table under the stairs. It was close upon 12 when he heard the crackling timber on the photographer's premises. Saw that the floor at the top was burning. Ran and got the reel. The fire never started on witness's premises. When witness returned with the reel the fire was breaking out of the windows. Did not allow gentlemen to smoke on the premises. It was the rule not to allow customers to smoke in the place. Had matches on the premises. Entered the premises by the back way, but did not notice Freeman's back window open. Had noticed it open at night once or twice, but not lately. Did not usually trouble to put the oven fire out, because it was all brickwork. When the oven door was closed it was all safe. L. A. Parks corroborated a portion of last witness's evidence, adding that he slept on a table, and his brother on a sofa on the premises, and when awakened saw the fire burning at the top of the stairs, and it seemed a large one, and to be in the photographic establishment. He could not speak as to the origin, but thought it very unlikely that the fire started on his father's premises. Was a smoker, but did not smoke on the night of the 26th. There was no appearance of any one having been in the place. Lily March, one of Mr. Parks's assistants, said when she left the premises about 7.20 p.m. there was no sign of fire. John Walter Dyer, night watchman, deposed to seeing fire at the back of

Mr. Parks's premises about 12.20, and said he gave the alarm. Considered that the fire started in the photographer's. He was past the premises at 11.30 previous, and neither saw nor smelt fire. He saw no persons about at the time. W. Giovanni, billiard-room manager, went to the assistance of Mr. Parks, and saw the flames going up the staircase. He had previously fancied he saw a reflection of fire in the photographer's front rooms.

Police constable Davidson said he passed Freeman's at about midnight, and there was no fire then. At 12.20 there was a report of a fire in Rundle-street, and on getting to the place saw flames issuing from the windows. The Coroner, in summing up, commented upon the difficulty of getting at the origin of fires, and referred to the new point raised as to the danger of clippings being liable to spontaneous combustion, of which photographers appeared to be ignorant. He said it was positively disgraceful to have in the city places in the state that the photographic establishment was in— partitions of the most flimsy and inflammable material in all parts of the establishment. That system of having paper and calico partitions was, he regretted, not confined to photographer's premises, or to a few places. There had been a good deal said outside in consequence of so many fires recently in the city, but in this case the evidence did not disclose anything leading to a suspicion that the fire in Rundle-street was the work of an incendiary. The enquiry lasted all day, and at the close the Jury after about an hour's deliberation brought in the following verdict :—"The Jury are of opinion that the fire which occurred on February 27 last on the premises of Mr. Freeman and Mr. Parks originated either on the stairs connecting Mr. Parks's premises with Mr. Freeman's or in the printing-room of Mr. Freeman just above the stairs, which is only separated by a single flooring-board ; but how the said fire originated there is no evidence to show."

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Tuesday 29 April 1879, page 4

ADELAIDE FIRE INSURERS' ASSOCIATION.

The third annual report of the committee of the Adelaide Fire Insurers' Association, presented at the general meeting held on March 27, shows that out of thirty-one Companies insuring against fire, which are represented in Adelaide, nineteen are members of the Association. The details of the report are not of very general interest, but there are a few points referred to worthy of careful attention by all who are anxious to increase the facilities for preventing the destruction of life or property by fire. We learn that the committee have held nineteen meetings during the year, and that their duties have been expansive and various. This description is not so clear as could be wished, but we presume it may be taken to indicate that the work of the executive is on the increase, and that it has been faithfully attended to. It will be remembered that the Superintendent of the Fire Brigade obtained, in October last, twelve months' leave of absence, and that his place in the meantime is supplied by Mr. Samuel Higgs. It was found necessary to arrange that the Superintendent in charge shall not journey a greater distance from Adelaide than will admit of his return on the same day. It appears that on the night on which the fire occurred at the East-End Market in February Mr. Higgs was absent from town, having, with the permission of the Chairman of the Association, gone to Rochester "to enquire as valuator into a fire at the Rochester Hotel." Hence the restriction to which we have referred. Complaint is made in the report that in some instances an inquest has been held so early after the occurrence of a fire that it was impossible for representatives of the Insurance Companies interested to attend. The attention of the Attorney-General has been called to this matter, and he has given

instructions with a view to removing the evil complained of. Another question touched upon is the importance of having the debris of fires searched by competent officials, with the view of ascertaining whether any light can by this means be thrown upon the origin of the conflagrations. It is suggested that, where practicable, this duty should be undertaken by the Superintendent of the Brigade and a police officer specially skilled in the work. Judging from the tone of some of the paragraphs, there does not appear to have been a very good understanding between the Association and the City Council. It will be remembered that while the former is subsidized by the Government, and receives contributions from some of the suburban and provincial Corporations, nothing whatever is paid to its funds by the metropolitan Corporation. The committee complain that though they wrote to the City Council, asking that measures might be taken to prevent the storage of large quantities of straw within the boundaries of the municipality, their communication was not even acknowledged. Various representations as to the need for an efficient Building Act have also been pressed upon the Council. A further application was made on the 7th March, but it is stated that this letter, too, was unacknowledged. This subject is one of very great importance, not only in regard to the risk from fire, but for other reasons. Many of the shops built within the last year or two are so constructed that if a fire once got complete hold of them there would be great danger of the fronts falling outwards into the streets and dragging a mass of brick or stone work with them. Of course the contingency of a fire occurring is not the only or the chief consideration which influences an architect in the selection of his style of architecture ; nevertheless, it should be taken into account more than it at present seems to be. The attention of the Corporation has also been called to the danger to be apprehended from sparks issuing from the short iron flues affixed to the boiler stoves now in common use outside buildings, but "no satisfactory reply has been received." It is, of course, in the summer time that these boilers are most frequently used in the open air, and that the practice does involve risk cannot be questioned. It would be going to too great an extreme to prohibit their use altogether, but it would not be difficult to frame regulations which would not be oppressive, and which if observed would certainly diminish the risk. The last ground of complaint against the City Council is that it has done nothing towards providing a fire-escape. From the report of Monday's meeting it will be seen that action is to be taken forthwith to supply this defect, and it is to be hoped that the Association will not have to repeat in their next report the complaint which they make in the present one. The report of the Acting-Superintendent, which is appended, only covers a period of three months — from October to December, 1878. The reason for this is stated to be that when the Superintendent left the colony he did not leave a record of the fires that had occurred during the previous nine months. This is certainly to be regretted, and it is very apt to beget the impression that sufficient care is not taken to keep the records of the Society accurately. This may be a secondary consideration, but in an organization where completeness of discipline and thorough-ness in every department are so important it is not reassuring to find that any portion of the work is neglected or allowed to get into arrear. The number of fires that occurred between October and December was only small, and the damage in nearly every case was inconsiderable. The Brigade is spoken of upon the whole in terms of commendation, but it is very evident that, owing to no fault of the men, the force is not in such a perfect state of organization as could be wished. If the Adelaide Corporation would take a more active interest in the movement the Association would unquestionably be greatly benefited. The subject no doubt chiefly concerns the Insurance Companies ; but it is one in which the citizens at large are also directly interested, for in no case does the

insurance cover the actual loss in the event of a wholesale destruction of property. It is true we are now in the period of the year when the risk of fire is not so imminent, but that is no reason why the necessary precautions should be relaxed. On the contrary, it will be the part of wisdom to employ the off season for the purpose of making the Fire Brigades in every respect more efficient and better prepared to cope with the special danger which it is their business to keep in check.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Wednesday 21 May 1879, page 2

Latest News.

ADELAIDE FIRE INSURERS' ASSOCIATION.—The following letter, showing the promptitude with which the fire brigades turned out upon a recent alarm of fire, has been handed to us for publication by Mr. Higgs, the Acting Superintendent of Fire Brigades :— "Sir—I have great pleasure in handing you the annexed information in respect of the false alarm raised this day for the purpose of giving the brigade practice, and testing the celerity with which the reels could be brought into play when they had no information of day, time, or place, except from the cabdrivers dispatched to assemble them. Having at 4h. 38¼m. p.m. this day met you at Acre 171, north corner of Waymouth and King William streets, and told you there was a fire at the Windsor Castle Hotel (Acre 267), you instantly dispatched cabs for the fire reels to come in, and I have to report their arrival at Acre 267 in the order as per table at foot hereof. It gives me great pleasure to be able to compliment all concerned on the expedition achieved, and at a time of day when in all probability some of the firemen were engaged in occupations at a distance from their stations. It will be observed that four reels, which were fetched distances ranging from three-quarters to a mile and a half, assembled in seven to eight and a half minutes.—I am, &c., A. ABRAHAMS, Chairman:—Reel No. 3—Foreman, A. Holland; station, Acre 528, King William-street south; yards travelled, 1,295; arrived, 4h, 45¼m.; time occupied, 7m. Reel No. 2—Foreman, J. Wedlock; station, Acre 60, Hindley-street west; yards travelled, 2,662 ; arrived, 4h. 46m.; time occupied, 7m. 45s. Reel No 7—Foreman, W. Hendry; station, Acre 20, Rundle-place; yards travelled, 1,120; arrived, 4h. 46¼m.; time occupied, 8m. Reel No. 1—Foreman, H. Powerditch; station, Acre 157, Devonshire-place; yards travelled, 2,205 ; arrived, 4h 46½m.; time occupied, 8m. 30s. Reel No. 4—Foreman, W. Smith; station, Acre 775, O'Connell-street; yards travelled, 6,195; arrived, 5h. 13m.; time occupied, 33m. 45s.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Wednesday 28 May 1879, page 4

Fire in Carrington-street. — A fire broke out on Monday night in Mr. John Eland's shop, at the corner of Carrington and Cardwell streets. The Acting-Superintendent of Fire Brigades, who lived close by, was there in a few minutes, and with the assistance of some of the neighbours he succeeded in extinguishing the fire before the reels arrived. There was a good deal of damage done, but the stock was insured. An inquest will be held.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Monday 23 June 1879, page 2

It is with much regret that we have to record the death, through an accident, of Mr. Samuel Higgs, J.P. Shortly after 2 o'clock on Saturday afternoon, June 21, he was riding in Currie-street on a horse which he had just obtained from the stables of Messrs. Formby and Boase, and when opposite the Wellington Inn the animal became restive and threw him backwards, his head coming into contact with the nave of the wheel of a licensed dray on the dray stand. Mr. Higgs was removed to the Wellington Inn, where he was attended by Dr. Way,

and under his advice taken to his residence in Hutt-street. His own medical adviser, Dr. Gardner, was called in, and from the first entertained very little hope of his recovery. Mr. Higgs never regained consciousness after the accident, and died at 1 o'clock on Sunday morning. It will be remembered that Mr. Higgs was for many years Superintendent of the Wallaroo Mines, which position he filled with efficiency, and only retired from it when expenses had to be curtailed in consequence of the diminished profitableness of the property. He was Chairman of the Local Board of Advice under the Education Act, and was also a Magistrate. He was a Fellow of the Geological Society, and had just been appointed a Commissioner to the Sydney Exhibition. At the time of his death he was the Acting-Superintendent of Fire Brigades, which post, however, he intended to resign at the end of the month, Mr. A. J. Baker having returned to the colony. The Coroner having made enquiries has satisfied himself that there is no necessity to hold an inquest. Mr. Higgs leaves a widow but no family. The funeral will take place this afternoon, and we believe that it is the intention of the members of the Fire Brigades to follow the remains of the deceased to the Cemetery. The late Mr. Higgs was a deservedly popular gentleman, and we are sure his untimely end will be a matter of general regret.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Monday 4 August 1879, page 2

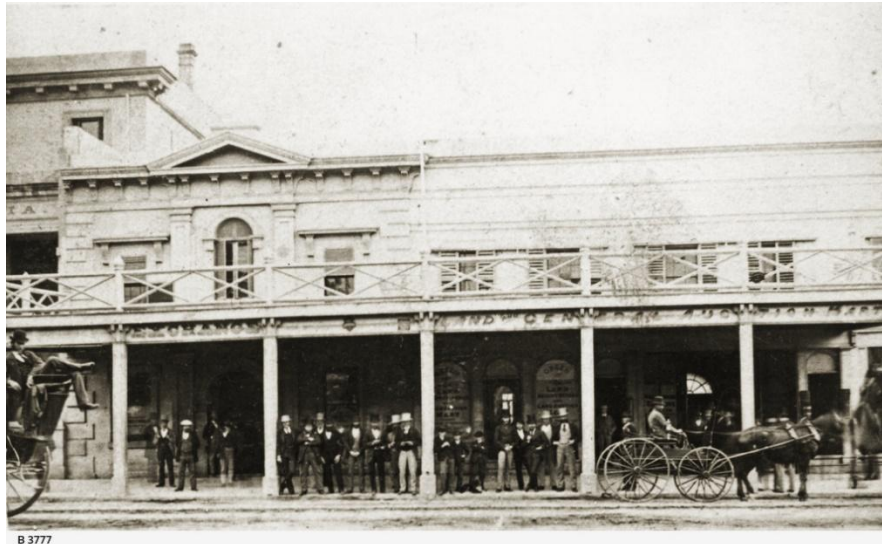
Latest News.

THE FIRE AT PARKS'S.—The adjourned inquest on the fire which occurred at the shop of Mr. Parks in Rundle-street, on July 22, was held by the City Coroner on Monday morning, and the following verdict was returned by the Jury:—"We are of opinion that the fire occurred through Edwin Parks incautiously placing a lighted candle too near the basket and paper on the counter." The Jury added a rider to the effect that Parks should be highly censured for leaving the shop and candle in so careless a manner, and he was accordingly censured by the Coroner.

***Tuesday 2nd September 1879 – Fire at Green's Exchange, King William Street, Adelaide
Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Wednesday 3 September 1879, page 2***

Latest News.

FIRE AT THE EXCHANGE.—The fire which broke out at the Exchange building, in King William-street, on Tuesday night, has not caused so much damage as was at first supposed. It was stated that the injury done to the building represented a value of £1,000, but Mr. Dalton Green now believes that £500 will cover it. The Exchange building and furniture are insured for £3,500 in the Royal Insurance Company, but the furniture and fittings belonging to Mr. Mildred were not covered by insurance. The building is to be put into repair immediately, and tenders have already been called for the work. The reading-room is at present untenable, but Mr. Green hopes to have that chamber in a state to temporarily accommodate subscribers by to-morrow. At present subscribers are permitted to use the auction mart at the back of the premises. An inquest will be held to-morrow into the circumstances connected with the fire by Mr. T. Ward, the City Coroner. Mr. Green believes that if another quarter of an hour's delay had occurred before assistance to quench the fire the whole building would have been consumed.



B 3777

State Library of South Australia - King William Street, Adelaide [B 3777]. [General description] Men and boys pose for the photographer along the verandah outside Green's Exchange. One man sits in a horse-drawn carriage on the right and on the left another man adopts a studied languid pose on the back of another carriage. [On back of photograph] 'Acre 109 / Green's Exchange, King William St., west side / About 1875.' Approximately 1875, Part of Acre 109 Collection

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Wednesday 3 September 1879, page 6

FIRE IN ADELAIDE.

A serious fire occurred in the very heart of the city on the night of Tuesday, September 2, and two of the principal banking institutions narrowly escaped partial destruction.

The fire broke out in the Exchange in King William-street shortly after 9 o'clock, but owing to the prompt attendance of Mr. Baker and his brigade it was con-fined entirely to the premises where it originated. These were the offices of Mr. H. H. Mildred, solicitor, who is the chief sufferer. It appears that he was at work in his office about 9 o'clock, and had gone out of one room into another to look-up an authority on law, when he noticed that the papers in the room he had left were in a blaze. He then saw that he must have left a lighted candle too near the pigeon holes above his desk, and that the projecting ends of the paper had been ignited. Mr. Mildred was without his coat at the time, and in this state he immediately rushed to the back door of the Bank of Australasia, which is situated next door, and where he knew buckets filled with water were kept in readiness for such emergencies. But unfortunately, either from his over excitement, or the alarm of the attendant who answered his loud knocking at the Bank premises, and was momentarily terrified at seeing a man in his shirtsleeves asking for a Bank Manager at night-time, he failed to make clear the fact that part of the Exchange was on fire, and that the Bank premises were in danger. Instead, therefore, of getting the water which he wanted, or of seeing Mr. Tomkinson, for whom he asked, he was told to go round to the front door. He did so, and his boisterous knocking made it still more apparent that he was an undesirable visitor. Therefore when he again enquired for Mr. Tomkinson he was told that it was past business hours, and that he must call next day. At length he appears to have made known the fact that the fire was burning, and that unless help were soon given the Exchange and the Banks on each side of it would be burned to the ground. Then the alarm was given to the police, and Mr. Baker and

SA Country Fire Service Promotions Unit

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12 April 2026

the Fire Brigade were soon ready for service. But meanwhile the fire, which five minutes sooner might have been extinguished with a few buckets of water, had gained such a hold on Mr. Mildred's offices (which are to the rear of the upper story of the Exchange) that the flames were shooting upward through the long glass roof, and hundreds of persons, seeing the glare, were flocking into Gilbert-place. This street was densely crowded when Superintendent Peterswald and a body of police arrived about a quarter past 9, and their first duty was to clear the thoroughfare and make room for Mr. Baker's brigade. The firemen in charge of No. 7 reel were first to answer the call of duty, and Nos. 1, 2, and 3 following immediately after. Nos. 2 and 7 were stationed to the rear of the burning buildings, and the other two in King William-street. All the reels were speedily at work, and a very few moments sufficed to get the mastery over the flames. Within a quarter of an hour all danger of the fire extending had passed, and the Bank Managers began to be more quiescent. But the work of destruction had gone on very rapidly in Mr. Mildred's offices. Two rooms and their contents were completely burnt, and the stair-case and walls of several other rooms were charred, while the flames extended to the roof of the Exchange itself, and shot out and illuminated the banking institutions, particularly the Australasia Bank building, the wooden verandah of which was in imminent danger, but never actually caught fire. The alarm, however, of Mr. Tomkinson and family was very considerable and very natural. Children were aroused from their beds, horses were taken from the stables, and other arrangements were made for a general exodus in the event of the conflagration spreading. But happily there was no need for a nocturnal migration from the Australasian Bank, and the new and beautiful Bank of South Australia on the other side of the Exchange was not in nearly so much danger, though Mr. Currie, the Manager, was on the *qui vive*. [A French phrase meaning long live who? (a sentry's challenge), used to mean a state of alertness or watchfulness] By half-past 9 o'clock the fire was subdued, and long before 10 o'clock Mr. Mildred and Mr. Baker had led exploring parties into the rooms where the fire originated. Then the extent of the damage was seen, though not with sufficient accuracy to enable a guess to be made of the probable monetary loss. The damage done amounts to several hundreds of pounds ; one authority said it could not be far short of £1,000. A good deal of this was owing to the deluge of water poured on to the burning premises, and which found its way into the Exchange Reading-room and offices below, where books and papers were somewhat injured thereby. It is understood that the Exchange building is insured in the Royal Insurance Company, but Mr. Mildred had not insured his fittings, furniture, or books, and he has lost many valuable law books, deeds, and papers. His safe, however, was not burnt, though the fire was raging all round it, and nothing else remains in the room where it stood. In the next room to those burnt Mr. Mildred had a still larger stock of books of reference. These are saved, though the windows, doors, and walls are all scorched on the outside. The flames extended to the other side of the gallery, but only the outside of the walls there is injured. The long glass roof has been much more damaged, and indeed seems to have been either burnt or broken almost to pieces. The lower story of the Exchange was not injured at all, except by the water ; and the many professional men who have offices there, and who came to town when they heard of the fire, had the satisfaction of knowing that little or no damage had been done to their property. Messrs. Green & Co., the lessees of the Exchange, have within the last few weeks resolved to build a new Exchange in the city, but the loss to them and to the mercantile community would have been considerable had not the fire been so soon subdued.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Wednesday 3 September 1879, page 3

A fire, which was happily extinguished within a short space of time, occurred in one of the offices connected with Green's Exchange on Tuesday evening, September 2. Mr. H. H. Mildred was working in his office on the top storey of the Exchange at 9 o'clock, and left his room to go into that of his partner (Mr. Beare) adjoining. He was only absent, as he says, for a minute or two, and on his return found all his papers in flames. He hastily availed himself of what water was handy but that supply being limited, he rushed into the street and gave the alarm. The flames spread rapidly and the wildest rumors as to the nature of the fire were heard. Adelaide is to be congratulated on the efficient body of firemen it possesses for in a few minutes after the alarm had been given Hendry's No. 7 Reel was on the spot and in full play. Wedlock's No. 2 Reel followed, and was also soon in operation. Nos. 3 and 1 Reels came afterwards and by their joint efforts the flames were brought under in about half an hour. There was plenty of water at hand, and the men, under the direction of the Superintendent (Mr. A. J. Baker), worked well together. A number of policemen were also on the spot and kept proper order, but their presence for that purpose was not much required. An examination of the premises after the fire showed that considerable damage had been done, not perhaps so much by fire as by water. One of Mr. Mildred's rooms was completely burned, and the landing was also very much charred. An iron safe containing books was found to be uninjured, and we believe other articles were recovered. The adjoining room, occupied by Mr. Beare, escaped with scarcely any injury, the woodwork only being charred outside. The fire was confined to the one room and the landing, although there is no doubt that if the firemen had not soon put in an appearance the consequences would have been much more disastrous. As it is the effects are bad enough, the reading-room of the Exchange and another small room being soaked with water. The opinion was expressed that the ceiling of the reading-room, which was completely saturated, would shortly fall. It has been estimated that the damage will scarcely be covered by a thousand pounds. The building is insured in the Royal Insurance Company, but for what amount we have been unable to ascertain. Every precaution was taken to see that the fire did not break out again, and although there was another alarm it proved to be a false one, and at half-past 10 o'clock the place was quite secure.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Wednesday 10 September 1879, page 2

THE ADELAIDE FIRE BRIGADE.

The Superintendent of Fire Brigades had the Adelaide Fire Brigade out for drill at 6 30 on Monday morning, September 8. The muster-roll was called as the half-hour chime struck. Seventeen firemen and the Government Turncock (Mr. McLean) were present, and answered the roll-call ; also two horse-reels, Nos. 1 and 2, and the two hand-reels, Nos. 3 and 7. The implements were inspected, and found clean and in good working order. The brigade were all practised in coiling the hose, connecting the couplings, &c., and also in the use of the small hose, and connecting and raising the ladders, of which the horse-reels carry 40 ft. ; also in forming a double line and passing water in buckets. The firemen were then told-off for practice at the fireplugs, near Mr. Oliver's timber-yards and sawmills, in Wakefield-street, which required the whole of the hose from two reels to be connected and worked as one length, to enable the branch men to get close enough to play water over the mill buildings. All the reels started from Hume-street at a signal given by the Superintendent, and ran to the fireplugs nearest the mills, put down the hydrant, attached the hose, and had the water playing in two minutes and a half. All the firemen worked together with a will, and appeared to understand their allotted positions, and to go through their drill with spirit. In

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the ladder practice the men ran fifty yards and connected and raised ladders in 17 sec. After the practice was over and the hose reeled up, the brigade returned to the Superintendent's residence, and were again formed into line and addressed by the Super-intendent, who said — "I am very pleased to see how well you are beginning to work together, and hope that each of you will always strive to maintain the character of the brigade. No matter which reel has the honour of being first at a fire, you should all feel gratified if the fire is got under without the aid of any other reel. It may be well, perhaps, to do a little chaffing privately among ourselves, but when speaking of your prowess publicly it should be our brigade — not this No. Reel or that No. Reel was first. It is the character of this brigade as a body that each and all of you should endeavour to maintain. The Adelaide Fire Brigade was organized in January, 1860, by your present Superintendent, at the request of some five or six Fire Insurance Companies then doing business in Adelaide, and in the first seven years the brigade turned out to 102 fires, and never let a fire extend beyond the building where it originated. For this service the Fire Insurance Companies presented your Superintendent with a gratuity of £100, which he distributed thus : —a gold watch and silver medal to the Super-intendent, and a silver medal to each of the ten firemen. The medals were designed by myself and struck off in England. This is my watch and medal. In the next seven years the brigade turned out to 199 fires, and this last seven years, or up to this month, the brigade turned out to 232 fires, making a total of 663 calls to fires, and not one of those fires in all that time — viz , over twenty years — was allowed to extend beyond the four walls where it occurred, except on two occasions last year, while the Superintendent was away on leave of absence. All of you are, comparatively speaking, new hands, Mr. Smith and Mr. Down, of No. 4 Reel, having joined in July, 1875; the next is Mr. Wedlock, in January, 1876 ; and the others since then, although Mr. Wedlock served as a fireman in the Adelaide Brigade some years previous, but had to resign on leaving Adelaide to work at Wallaroo or Moonta, so that the Adelaide Fire Brigade of the present day will be able to boast of a trophy that was never before awarded to any body of men serving as firemen in the Adelaide Fire Brigade, and I can assure you all I feel very pleased at the recognition of your services for turning out on the night of September 2, when Green's Exchange Buildings took fire. Messrs. Green & Co. have sent their cheque for ten guineas to be distributed among you, for the promptness displayed in arriving and extinguishing the fire. Now, men, I have called you together to tell you how pleased I am at this tribute to your zeal, and I sincerely trust it will not spoil you, by making you fancy yourselves an efficient fire brigade, who have nothing more to learn. I served as a fireman in a town of wooden houses— St. Johns, New Brunswick — before I came to Adelaide, and undertook the onerous position of Superintendent, and have had twenty years' experience here, but always find something to learn at each fire, therefore it is to be hoped that this kind present of Messrs. Green & Co. will stimulate each and all of you to greater exertions, and cause you to strive to learn your duty and carry it out promptly and coolly, 'and not waste too much ammunition' — I mean water; and that it will also make you proud of the honourable position you hold as firemen, and may each and all of you long live to work together as protectors of our city. With these few remarks, and again thanking you for the attention you give to your duty, and for the great compliment and praise you have earned, I will propose that you join in three hearty cheers for Messrs. Green & Co. — hip, hip, hip hurrah, &c. Now, men, I shall be glad to listen to any remarks any among you may wish to make as to what reply I shall give to Messrs. Green & Co. on your behalf." The seventeen firemen there upon held a consultation, and unanimously agreed to spend the ten guineas and as much more as might be required to obtain a good likeness of the

Superintendent in uniform, and that the same be presented to Messrs. Green & Co. to be hung in their Exchange Room to commemorate their kind and flattering recognition of the Brigade's services on Tuesday night, the 2nd of September, 1879, when all the reels of the brigade were present within a few minutes after the alarm was given, and also as a record of the first notice or recognition of the Adelaide Fire Brigade in more than twenty years' service, or once in 663 times of actual service.

South Australian Chronicle and Weekly Mail (Adelaide, SA : 1868 - 1881), Saturday 13 September 1879, page 9

THE FIRE AT GREEN'S EXCHANGE

On Thursday morning, September 4, Mr. Thos. Ward, J.P., City Coroner, held an enquiry at the Imperial Hotel into the circumstances attending the fire which occurred at the office of Mr. H. A. Mildred, solicitor. Green's Exchange, on Tuesday evening, September 2. Mr. J. Clark acted as foreman of the Jury. Mr. A. J. Baker, Superintendent of Fire Brigades, attended on behalf of the Royal Insurance Company. Messrs. Green and Lovely (Green & Co.) were also present. Henry A. Mildred, solicitor, of Adelaide, said he occupied an office in Green's Exchange. He was at work about 8.30 on Tuesday evening in the office. He had one candle which he had in his hand. No one was with him. Below, in the office of Captain Howes, he thought he saw a light. Captain Howes' clerk was there, because he met him and told him to go for the police. The fire started in his office. The pigeonholes in the desk he occupied close up with a flap. He fancied that the papers became ignited when he was passing from one room to the other. He did not see the papers ignite, but when he got back he saw the papers in a blaze. He at once shut the desk up and got a basin of water from the next room and threw it over the pigeonholes. He then closed the office doors and went down stairs. He went to a side door of the Bank. He heard a person walking up and down, and called out for a bucket of water. The man did not give him any, but told him to go round to another door. He did not know who the man was, but believed him to be a servant at the Bank. Witness then ran to the front of the Bank, but could not get in. Then ran to Mr. Tomkinson's side door, but could get no admittance. Two ladies passed and said there was a light in the building. He afterwards heard some one in the passage whom he thought was Mr. Tomkinson. He said, "Oh, let me in," and the voice replied, "Call the next morning." He did not recollect whether he said the Exchange was on fire. He had no coat or hat on at the time, having left them up-stairs. Nothing more occurred at Mr. Tomkinson's door. He was afterwards let in at Mr. Tomkinson's back door, he thought by Mr. Malcolm Davis. By that time Mr. Tomkinson must have known that the Exchange was on fire. He stayed for a short time in the yard. Two young ladies were there, who said, "Papa thought it was some one who wished to see him on business." When the fire was put out he went upstairs with Superintendent Peterswald and Mr. Baker. He was not insured, and had no opportunity of saving any thing in the private office. Everything was destroyed except an iron safe. He had lost a number of law books, papers, and diaries, but no deeds. By Mr. Baker— Took his coat and hat off before the fire, and left them inside the office. By the Jury— A number of persons had been in the office subsequently to his getting back from the Bank. He had no reason for not calling out "fire" in the first place. Henry P. Tomkinson, clerk, said he saw Mr. Mildred about 9.15 on Tuesday evening. He previously spoke to him from the inside of the yard. Mr. Mildred knocked at the gate and asked to be admitted. The gates were locked and the key was away. Mr. Mildred mentioned nothing about the Exchange being on fire. Did not observe any fire then. Told Mr. Mildred, whom he could not see and did not know, that the

doors were locked and that the key was not there. Mr. Mildred then asked to see Mr. Tomkinson, but did not mention anything about the Exchange being on fire. Told him to go away, as that was not the proper entrance. Mr. Mildred told him his name, but witness did not know who Mr. Mildred was. The conversation lasted about five minutes. Mr. Mildred was talking about books and papers, but what Mr. Mildred meant he could not understand. He called out that he would send for a policeman if he did not go away. Brought a policeman, and then saw a person standing on the steps at the side entrance without a coat and hat ringing the bell. Told the policeman that there was a "fellow" in the lane making himself a nuisance by knocking at the gate. Afterwards saw a fire and removed the horses from the stables to a livery-stable. James Skethaway, clerk, employed by Captain Howes, said his employer's office was in Green's Exchange, on the ground floor, but not directly under Mr. Mildred's. He left the office about 9 p.m. on Tuesday. Saw Mr. Mildred at the back of the offices without a coat or hat on. Mr. Mildred asked him if he had seen a police-man. Witness said "No." Mr. Mildred looked excited, as if something was the matter. Asked him if he could assist him. Mr. Mildred asked him to get a policeman, and to "hurry him up, as it was pressing." Mr. Mildred did not say the office was on fire. Went for a policeman, and brought one back. Then saw the fire burning. Henry Rogers, detective, said about five minutes past 9 on Tuesday night he was walking down King William-street. Saw a flash of light over the Exchange. He ran round to Gilbert-place. Saw no one about. The door was open leading to Mr. Mildred's office. Noticed that the upper rooms at the rear of the building were in flames. Went upstairs, and saw there was no chance of saving any-thing, so he went down stairs and shut the doors. Met a policemen, and sent him to the Station to warn the Superintendents. Sent a man to Messrs. Wills & Co.'s for the reel. A mob of people then came up shouting "Save property." Remained, and would not let the door be opened until the reel came. Mr. Mildred came up, and witness said, "Is this your office?" Mr. Mildred had no hat or coat on, and carried a small black bag. Mr. Mildred said "Yes." Asked how it happened, and Mr. Mildred said, "Oh, my papers took fire, and this all I have." He made gestures as if he had just escaped. Asked if anything could be saved. The answer was "Oh, no." Mr. Mildred then took the key out of his pocket and locked the door. Told him there was no need to do that, as the door would have to be broken open when the reel came. Mr. Mildred then unlocked the door, and insisted on going in. A young man from Moseley's rushed inside. Mr. Mildred then tried to lock the door from the inside. Witness had to forcibly remove him. Mr. Mildred was intoxicated. The reel afterwards came up. The fire was put out very quickly by about 9.35. Charles Barry, assistant at Mr. Moseley's oyster rooms, King William-street, said he heard an alarm of fire about a quarter to 9 on Tuesday evening. Ran round to the back of the Exchange and saw Detective Rogers and a police-constable trying to induce a person to open the door or allow it to be opened. The person had no hat or coat on, and was resisting the officers. The door was opened, and witness ran upstairs. The fire was burning fiercely, and had taken possession of the staircase. The person without the coat wanted to shut himself in, and the police had to eject him by force. George Dutton Green, land agent, said he was part owner of the Exchange. He first heard of the fire at ten minutes past 9 on Tuesday evening. A cabman came to his house and gave the alarm. He estimated the damage at from £400 to £500. The building and furniture is insured in the Royal for £3,500. Had always done all he could to prevent fire. There was no gas laid on in the upper rooms, or fireplace in them. Arthur John Baker, Superintendent of Fire Brigades, said he received notice of the fire at fifteen minutes past 9 on Tuesday evening. Arrived at the place in a few minutes. Two reels were in play. The fire was put out in a few minutes.

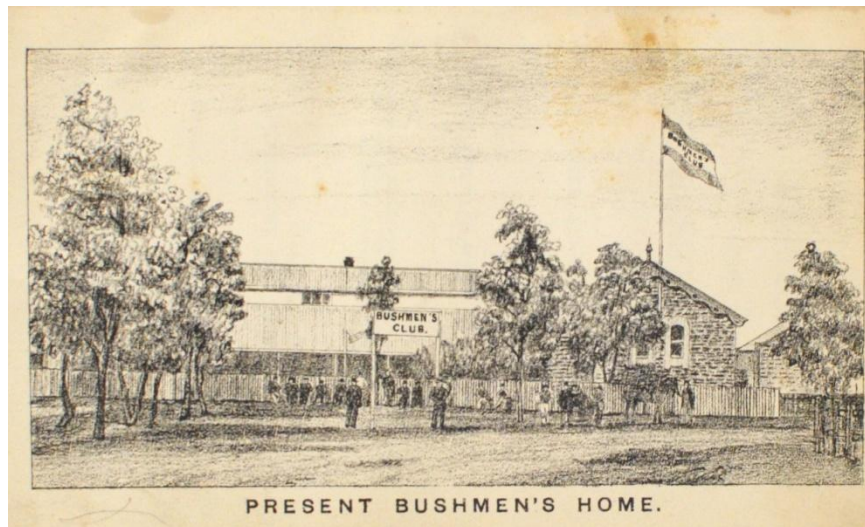
Found a coat on the banisters of a balcony outside the office. There was a chance of a great deal of damage being done. It was only by the strong force of water that the fire was subdued. He wondered how the fire was put out so quickly, as the upper portion of the Exchange was "a complete matchbox" — by that he meant all old timber. Samuel Tomkinson, J.P., Bank Manager, said about ten minutes past 9 o'clock on Tuesday evening some one came to his door and rang the bell. He spoke to the person through the door. Did not know it was Mr. Mildred at the time. Mr. Mildred did not give his name at first, but asked to be let in, as he wanted to see him. Afterwards Mr. Mildred said there was a fire next door. Went upstairs and opened the window, and then recognised Mr. Mildred on the steps without a coat or hat on. He appeared to be very much excited, and said his hair was burnt. The Bank premises were not injured at all by the fire. All the inconvenience he sustained was in making preparations for the fire if it extended to the Bank. If a fire occurred on a hot night in the Exchange with a north wind blowing the Bank would be endangered. Always considered so, and never went to bed without first going on to the balcony and seeing that all was right outside. The Coroner then summed up. He reviewed the evidence, and said the origin of the fire was very plain from Mr. Mildred's evidence. He commented on Mr. Mildred's conduct in not spreading the alarm of fire when he first saw the flames. The fire might have been a very serious one, as it took place in the very heart of the city, with two large Banks on each side of it. If it had occurred in the summer with a north wind blowing they could not tell what the consequences might have been. All the witnesses had said that Mr. Mildred was very excited, whilst Detective Rogers said he was intoxicated. Had Mr. Mildred been in his sober senses he would doubtless have acted otherwise on first discovering the fire. It was a very serious matter for the Jury to consider, and he did not think that Mr. Mildred was at all free from blame. There was no doubt that the fire occurred accidentally, but he did not know whether Mr. Mildred by his conduct had not left himself open to a private action for the damage. The Jury after a short deliberation found "that the fire which occurred in Mr. Mildred's office was caused through the culpable negligence of Mr. Mildred." The following rider was also added: —"The Jury are further of opinion that Mr. Mildred should be severely censured for his conduct in using a naked candle in his office whilst in a state of intoxication, and for his subsequent conduct in not giving an immediate alarm of the fire. The Coroner then severely censured Mr. Mildred. Mr. Green said he desired to recognise publicly the praiseworthy and successful efforts of the Fire Brigade in extinguishing the fire.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Tuesday 4 November 1879, page 2

Latest News

THE ADELAIDE FIRE BRIGADE.—On Monday evening, with the view of testing the celerity and efficiency of the Adelaide Fire Brigade, a false alarm of fire was raised by the Chairman of the Fire Brigade Association (Mr. A. Abrahams) by arrangement with the police, which had the effect of bringing to the Bushmen's Club, Whitmore-square, four of the city reels. The alarm was given at the Police Station by telegraph to the Superintendent of Fire Brigades at 10.40 p.m., and a cab having been sent for him to his residence in Hutt-street, he arrived at the Bushmen's Club in eleven minutes, the vehicle having had to travel over two miles. The four reels were summoned in a similar manner, and arrived in the following order: —No. 4 (Acre 528, King William-street south), arrived at the Club at 10.53, and played water at 10.56; No. 7 (Acre 21, Rundle-street), arrived at 10.59, and played water at 11.1; No. 2 Reel (opposite Simms's Brewery, Hindley-street), arrived at 11, and played water at 11.4; No. 1

(opposite the National Hotel, Pirie-street), arrived at 11.4, and played water at 11.6. Some of the reels had to come between two and three miles, and the trial was very satisfactory, as proving the speed with which the Brigade can get to work.



South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Wednesday 12 November 1879, page 6

ADELAIDE CORPORATION.

FORTNIGHTLY MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11.

The superintendent of fire brigades for-warded a copy of a resolution passed by the Adelaide Fire Insurance Association to the effect that the corporation should be asked to allow street lamps to be placed opposite fire reel stations, and offering to pay the expenses of removal. Referred to the works committee.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Tuesday 25 November 1879, page 3

ADELAIDE CORPORATION.

FORTNIGHTLY MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL.

Monday, November 24.

Messrs. Lawrence, Son, & Co., of London, stated that they hoped to get the provincial fire escape ordered by the council shipped by the Goolwa, which was to sail in October.
Received.

Fire Reel Stations. — Committee have considered request of Superintendent of Fire Brigades, and cannot recommend corporation lamps be removed and placed opposite fire-reel, stations; but they advise Fire Insurers' Association be allowed, during pleasure of council, to erect lamps similar to corporation lamps at places indicated, and to light same, association bearing whole cost.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Thursday 4 December 1879, page 6

Huon House, Hutt Street, Adelaide, November 5, 1879,

The Hon. the Commissioner of Public Works. Sir— I have the honour to place before you the following resolution, passed at the Adelaide Fire Insurers' Association, Limited, meeting held yesterday afternoon, viz. : — 'That the Superintendent of Fire Brigades write to the Commissioner of Public Works re the water pressure at fires and practice meetings of the Fire Brigade.' You may perhaps have noticed an article in the daily newspapers as to the lack of water pressure and available power for extinguishing fires in this city. I wish to remark that previous to the water supply for suburban districts the pressure was strong enough to command the highest buildings, which is not the case now, and requires to be enquired into. Early in October the Post-master-General requested me to test the hydrant and apparatus in the Post-Office yard. I did so, and found the pressure useless. Thinking this might be the fault of the service pipes, I called out the Fire Brigade and notified the Superintendent of Mains at the valve-house. Hackney, that the brigade were to be out for practice ; and I again on Monday morning tested the fire-plugs in front of the General Post-Office, and found the pressure inadequate to protect the Government buildings in case of fire. I have lately had 'safety-valves' affixed to all of the fire brigade hydrants to prevent the hosepipes and mains from bursting. I name this to show that every precaution is taken to guard against accidents incident to working with the fire brigade at the highest water pressure available, and feel confident it is false economy or wrong judgment of any one attempting to stint the pressure at fires, or even at practice meetings of the fire brigade. In the latter case, unless the firemen are drilled to use the water at high pressure, they cannot be expected to understand the power of the element they use for extinguishing fires. On these grounds I would respectfully suggest that written orders be issued to the Superintendent of Mains that at all notified fires and practice meetings the full head pressure of water be put on — without waiting to see the blaze before he turns on full pressure. I have the honour, &c,
ARTHUR JNO. BAKER. Supt. Memo. — I would also beg to state that if not too expensive a gauge dial should be placed at the Superintendent of Fire Brigade's residence, so that when he telegraphs to the valvehouse notice of a fire or a practice with the fire brigade he may know the pressure he has on to work with, and set his safety or blow-off valves in accordance therewith. — A. J. B To the Commissioner of Public Works. Adelaide. [The Hydraulic Engineer's report on this was published, in Tuesday's Register.] Hutt-street, Adelaide, December 2. 1879. The Hon. the Commissioner of Public Works. Sir— I have the

honour to state that your reply to my letter of 5th November re the water pressure in Adelaide, together with the Hydraulic Engineer's report thereon, is to hand, and has also appeared in the columns of this morning's Register, without my first letter to you. which the said report so severely criticised, being also given for the benefit of the public. However, I am glad to know the available water pressure in Adelaide is from eighty to ninety pounds, but am sorry my statements are all disbelieved. I have always given due notice to the Superintendent of Mains when a fire occurs, or when going out for practice, and at the request of the Postmaster-General did in his presence try the water pressure, and found it inadequate for the protection of the Post-Office and other high buildings, and have tried it three times since, and at different hours of the day, and always with same result. I was not aware that my asking to have full pressure put on for five minutes about once a month, to give the firemen a proper idea of the power of the water, so as to make them careful in 'turning on' and in 'shutting off' at high pressure, could possibly cause great inconvenience to a large number of people, and can not be done merely to enable the brigade to practise.' Now, I am simple enough to believe that the people would be much more inconvenienced by a large fire. As to my being unjust to the Superintendent of Mains, or wishing to insinuate anything prejudicial to him, was not intended. I merely judged of his actions from his own reply to me, when I asked him about the water, pressure given at fires. He said— "I look out when the telegraph fire alarm-bell rings, but could not see any blaze, so did not give full pressure." Telegraphic communication does exist between the Superintendent of Mains and the Superintendent of Fire Brigades, and all I ask is that an receipt of warning of a fire the official in charge of the valves be instructed to arrange them so as to give the greatest possible pressure to the locality where the fire is, without looking about for the blaze to show up first. I am very much obliged to the Hydraulic Engineer for his advice as to the 'relief valves' which I fear he does not understand, or he would not have so flippantly condemned them as he has done. I still firmly assert that the 'relief valves,' I use do protect the mains, as well as my hose pipes, whenever the water is suddenly shut off at the branch pipe ; but I also allow that if shut off at the fire-plug it could not possibly affect the hose-pipe, but on the contrary would reduce the pressure in the hose to nil. Your Hydraulic Engineer also condemns the quality of hose we use, and recommends leather. Well, I can inform him we discarded leather hose eighteen years ago as obsolete at that time, and have ever since used vulcanized indianrubber hose of best quality, and find from experience that it wears better, is easier kept in order, and stands the very highest available pressure. So I trust that strict orders will for the future be given to the official in charge of the valves to give the highest available pressure the moment he is notified by telegraph of a fire in the city—even though we run the risk of having an old hose-pipe burst now and then. I considered it my duty to report to you of the low pressure of water, and the danger there-from should a fire break out in any of the upper floors of the highest buildings ; in such case the Fire Brigade would be unable to reach it. It is therefore quite essential that the highest available pressure be given instanter. I have the honour, &c.. ARTHUR JNO. BAKER, Supt.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Tuesday 16 December 1879, page 1

NOTICE. — FIRE BRIGADE NOTICE.—The Street Lamps nearest to where the Fire Reels are kept have Red Glass with "Fire Reel" thereon, and the Posts are also painted Red, to indicate where the Firemen and Fire Reels are stationed in Adelaide. ARTHUR JNO. BAKER,