

Adelaide Fire Brigade 1882

Arthur J. Baker is listed in the Boothby 1882 directory residing on the North West corner of Hutt and Hume Streets. Superintendent of Fire Brigades—Arthur, John Baker, Hutt street

Wm Holland, with the Number 3 Reel is on King William Street, East side between Carrington and Halifax Streets, a few doors up from Morris's Blacksmiths.

Arthur F. Lighton, is listed as Hutt Street Fire Brigade.

Joseph Morris is also listed as the Number 3 Reel on King William Street.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Saturday 14 January 1882, page 1

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS' ASSOCIATION.

ADELAIDE. Friday. January 13.

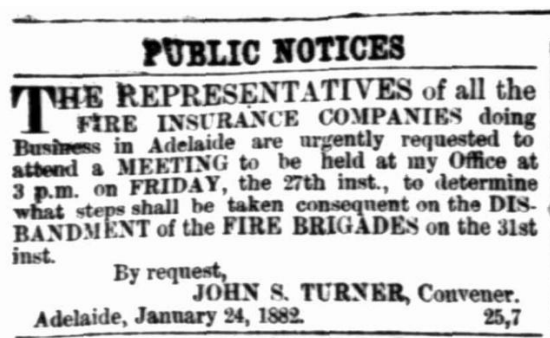
Present— The Mayor of Adelaide (Mr. E. T. Smith, M.P.), in the chair ; Messrs. Thompson (Mayor) and Kestel, Port Adelaide ; Caterer (Mayor) and Dew, Kensington and Norwood ; Dean (Mayor) and Wilkinson, Gawler ; Cameron (Mayor) and Thiem, Kapunda; Downing (Mayor), Brighton; Greer (Mayor) and Macklin, Unley ; Councillors Mair and Gould, representing Glenelg and Hind-marsh respectively ; and the Secretary (Mr. T. Worsnop).

FIRE BRIGADES ACT. The President referred to the fact that the Fire Insurance Companies had refused to have anything further to do with the Fire Brigades ; but he might say, to check unnecessary alarm with respect to the position of the city if the brigade were disbanded, that though the Companies had said they would not pay any more to the brigade after this month, he had been assured by several of their representatives that if they saw there was any possibility of the whole question being properly dealt with this year they would keep the brigades going till the new arrangement came into force. A clause in his report was as follows : — "I venture to suggest to this Association that they have a Bill prepared for a Fire Brigades Act which shall apply to all towns and centres of population providing for the establishment and control of Fire Brigades, and the payment pro rata by all Fire Insurance Companies of such a portion of the cost of keeping in efficient order the brigades and machinery under their care as shall be deemed just and fair, the balance to be provided by the Government and the Police Fund in equal proportions." The Corporations would be the best parties to control these matters. At present some of the Insurance Companies contributed to the cost of the brigades, and some, though they cut down the rates of those who did pay, did not pay them-selves, and hence the difficulty which had arisen. If the Corporations got the Act he had suggested they could compel all the Companies to sub-scribe to the cost in proportion to the business they did. Between them they should pay at least one-third, and the Government, he understood, were willing to continue payment of another third. As the police moiety was deducted from the Corporations they might fairly expect the Government to allow the contributions from the various Companies to go to them. It was only fair that that should be done, because in cases of fires the police had considerable trouble and control. So far as the city was concerned, there would be no difficulty in having a Fire Brigade com-posed solely of policemen, and as the Corporations contributed largely towards the policemen's wages, their services in this way might fairly be asked for. In the country, of course, they could not possibly have

brigades so composed. He had thought, moreover, that the Corporations might take power to impose a small rate, if necessary, to provide funds for the purpose of maintaining the brigades ; but, still, he did not believe that a rate would be required. If the suggestion were adopted steps he had taken would ensure the prompt and in-expensive drafting of an effective Bill. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Thompson moved that the suggestion be adopted. He believed that it would commend itself to the people of Port Adelaide, who had felt some concern at the probable disbanding of the brigades. He did not think the tax suggested would find much favour, nor did he consider it was necessary. Mr. Dean seconded, remarking that there could be no more obnoxious tax in Gawler than that suggested. There the relations between the Fire Insurers' Association and the Corporation had been most unsatisfactory, and if the Association had not gone into liquidation it was the intention of his Corporation to sever their connection with it. The cost of extinguishing fires had been so heavy as almost to look like extortion. Hence a very strong feeling that the Corporations should have some control in the matter. Mr. Caterer, whilst supporting the motion, disapproved of the suggestion that the Government— for that was what it amounted to — should pay two-thirds of the cost, and the Companies only one-third. The latter ought to contribute at least one-half. At present the Government paid one third, and the Companies two-thirds, he presumed ? (Mr. Dean—"The Gawler Corporation has been paying one-third.") However, he would not press now what was only a matter of detail. He alluded, as a good example, to the fact that in Norwood and Kensington a brigade now ready for service had been formed of volunteers, aided by private subscriptions to get the necessary plant. Mr. Kestel, supporting, also thought the Companies should pay half the cost. The President said that before the Bill went to the House it would be submitted to the Corporations for discussion, and details could then be arranged. The motion was carried unanimously.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Friday 27 January 1882, page 2

PUBLIC NOTICES



Wednesday 8th February 1882 - The Adelaide Fire Brigade drill, Hutt Street

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Thursday 9 February 1882, page 4

The re-organized Adelaide Fire Brigade were out for practice on Wednesday morning, February 8, at 6 o'clock, when, all of the old brigade firemen except one were present to sign an agreement to serve under Superintendent A. J. Baker until July 31 next, their pay to date from February 1. 1882. Eleven good well-trying firemen turned out with the three horse reels — each man signed an agreement to serve as fireman for six months. The twelfth man will be appointed today. The usual examination of the plant and the drill was gone through and proved satisfactory, the plant being in good working order, and the firemen as quick and efficient as ever. The telephone lines between the head station, Hutt-street, the three fire

brigade stations— viz., Hindley street west, Rundle-street, and North Adelaide — also the valve-house, Botanic-road, and the Police Station, King William-street, are now in good working order ; from either of which stations notice of fire can be given to the Superintendent and his fire brigade, which will cause a great saving of time in calling out the brigade and the police on first alarm of fire within the city.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Monday 20 February 1882, page 2

GENERAL NEWS.

The members of the Adelaide Fire Brigade were called out for practice at half-past 4 o'clock on Monday morning, February 20. The distinguishing colors of the three horse-reels are— No. 1, red; No. 2, white; No. 4, blue. They are worked by twelve firemen. The reels were called out by telephone, and were all on the practice ground, Hutt-street, within twenty minutes of the alarm being given from the Police Station to the superintendent. No. 1 (Elder-street) was third. No. 2 (Hindley-street) was second, No. 4 (Archer-street, North Adelaide), was first. After a close inspection of the reels and implements, the men were put through ladder practice, and a triangle of ladders was formed by erecting three ladders of 20 feet each strengthened at the base by placing the pike-poles against them. Three pike-poles were placed at 80 feet distance from this triangle, and these red, white, and blue poles marked the position the firemen with the branch pipes were to run to from the fireplugs. The three companies were started by whistle-signal to run off three lengths (150 feet) of hose, and play water on to the triangle. No. 4 was first to play water, No. 1 was second, and No. 2 was third. Some other exercises were also gone through to the satisfaction of the superintendent.

South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Wednesday 22 February 1882, page 4

The Advertiser WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1882.

The superintendent of the Fire Brigade reported at the Police-station on Tuesday morning the particulars of a fire which had broken out early that morning in a stable at the rear of Messrs. Wilcox & Co., drapers, Rundle-street. The damage done was of a trifling nature, and the fire was soon got under. The city coroner has been communicated with.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Thursday 23 February 1882, page 4

The Late Fire in Rundle-street.— The City Coroner (Mr. Thomas Ward, J.P.) held an inquest at the Star of the East Hotel on Wednesday morning, on the fire which occurred in a store at the rear of Mr. Thomas Wilcox's premises, Rundle-street, early on the morning of Tuesday, February 21. Mr. M. Wells was chosen foreman of the Jury. Mr. M. Kingsborough watched the proceedings on behalf of the Transatlantic Fire Insurance Company. Mr. Wilcox stated that he left his shop at 6.30 on the evening of February 20, leaving a cook on the premises. Everything was apparently safe at that time. The first notification he had of the fire was on Tuesday morning, when he was informed by one of his neighbours. The store where the fire occurred was used for keeping surplus drapery fittings. He understood that he was insured in the Transatlantic Fire Insurance Company, but he had been told by Mr. Kingsborough that the store was not covered by the insurance policy. He estimated his total loss at £130. The other evidence taken was to the effect that the fire was first discovered by Police Constable Northey at 3.15 a.m. on Tuesday morning. On his reaching the scene he found that the flames were then confined to the north-west corner. After assuring himself, that no one was

about the premises he went and obtained a fire reel, which, with the assistance of Messrs. Hagerty and Witcombe, subdued the flames. Mr. A. J. Baker, Superintendent of Fire Brigades, was present, but on his arrival the fire had been got under. He had had the debris examined, but found nothing to reveal the origin of the fire. During the enquiry evidence was given that the store in which the fire started, and which contained £90 worth of property, had been left open for several weeks at night, in consequence of the door requiring some little repairs. The store was situated in a right-of-way and open to any person who might choose to walk that way. The Coroner in summing up drew the special attention of the Jury to the point that in all probability the fire would not have happened had Mr. Wilcox done his duty in seeing that the store was locked up at night. The Jury returned a verdict that there was no evidence to show how the fire originated, and added as a rider that great credit was due to Police-Constable Northey and Messrs. Hagerty and Witcombe for their energetic action in the matter.

South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Friday 24 February 1882, page 6

FIRE IN WAYMOUTH-STREET.

At about half-past 2 o'clock on Thursday morning Constable Loughlin, who was on duty in Waymouth-street, observed flames rising from Allen's clothing factory, which is situated a short distance off Waymouth-street. The factory was a two-story place, the upper portion being chiefly used as a place to store the cloth and bundles of tweeds. It was also used as a workroom, and at the time of the fire it contained several sewing machines. The ground floor of the factory was used as a cutter's room, and was also the chief workroom, and the made-up and finished articles were kept there. The moment the fire was discovered it was reported at the police station, and shortly afterwards to the superintendent of the fire brigade. Reels Nos. 1, 2, and 4 were quickly in attendance, but the flames had got such a complete hold of the building that it was entirely destroyed, and nothing but the bare walls and rafters were left standing. At the north end of the building, and underneath the top story of the factory, were two rooms, which at the time of the fire were occupied by Mr. Rundle, a blacksmith, who, with his wife, was in bed. The noise of the fire, however, roused them, and they quickly got out of the room, but were unable to save much of their furniture or clothes. The things which were not destroyed by fire were completely spoilt by water, and among them were a number of account books. Mr. Rundle estimates his loss at about £40, and he is entirely uninsured. The whole of the stock in the factory is insured in the City Mutual Fire Insurance Company, and the New Zealand Fire Insurance Company, and the building is insured in the Equitable Company.

An inquest was commenced in the afternoon at the Shakespeare Hotel, before the city coroner (Mr. T. Ward, J.P.). Mr. Wm. Stewart was chosen foreman of the jury, and Mr. Yuill was present to watch the proceedings on behalf of the above-mentioned insurance companies. The only evidence taken was that of P.C. Wm. Loughlin, who stated the facts as above given. He also deposed, that when he first noticed the flames they were issuing from the south-west corner of the building, to the north of the chimney, and that there was no one near the spot when the fire broke out. The flames were subdued in about an hour. The coroner said the police would probably be able to collect some more evidence during the next few days, and an adjournment of the enquiry would be necessary. The inquest was then adjourned until Monday morning next.

Sunday 12th March 1882 – Fire at Messrs. James Marshall & Co., Rundle Street.
South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Monday 13 March 1882, page 6

GREAT FIRE IN RUNDLE STREET.

A fire which was without doubt the largest and most destructive that has ever occurred in Adelaide took place on the premises of Messrs. James Marshall & Co., in Rundle street, on Sunday morning, March 12. It is not very often that fires of any great magnitude occur in the city, and about the two largest conflagration that have ever been seen were that by which the establishment of Messrs. D. & W. Murray received such damage some ten or twelve years ago, and that which destroyed a number of shops at the East-End Market between two and three years ago. In order to give our readers some idea of the disastrous nature of the fire on Sunday it will be necessary to describe the position of the buildings most affected as well as those in the immediate vicinity. The shops which have been occupied by Messrs. James Marshall and Co. are three in number, and were before the foundation of the present firm known as the premises of Messrs. J. Hodgkiss & Co. and Mr. J. W. Parkin. The street numbers of the shops are 26, 28, and 30, and the shops themselves have a frontage to Rundle-street of about 60 feet, their respective depths being about 210 feet, 160 feet, and 120 feet. No. 26 is a two-story building in front, and the rear premises are three stories high, with a cellar underneath. No. 28 is also two stories in height, and there are four flats in the extension to the rear. No. 30 is a three-story building for the whole length, and there is a small lean-to at the back. The west shop adjoins the very large and hand-some block of buildings recently erected by Messrs. Donaldson, Andrews, & Sharland, and the eastern portion of the premises is next to the shop occupied by Mr. J. W. Davis and Mr. Woodman. The four-story portion of the central shop is only separated from the billiard saloon and stables connected with the Globe Hotel by a right-of-way about 12 feet in width, and on the other side of Fisher place, a small lane off Stephens-place, are the furniture and fancy goods department of Messrs. Marshall & Co. and a shop leased by Messrs. Berens Brothers. At the rear of No. 25 is a portion of the store of Messrs. D. & J. Fowler. It may be well further to explain that there were fifteen flats in the three shops of Messrs. Marshall & Co. The ground floor in the front of No. 26 contained the men's, youths', and boys' clothing and mercery and the woollens departments. Up-stairs were the carpet, matting, curtain, and furniture departments. In the cellar at the back were stored bulk goods, consisting of chairs, crockery, bedsteads, and goods of a similar description. On the ground floor were reserve Manchester goods, slops, haberdashery, hosiery, linens, and the cutter's department. On the next flat were reserve dresses, cashmeres, mattings, window hollands, ladies' jackets, ulsters, stays, under-linen, &c, and on the top floor were the men's bedrooms and sitting room. In the front portion of No. 28 shop, on the ground floor, were the dress, trimming, but-ton, Manchester, and linen departments and the counting-house, and on the second floor in front were the stays, millinery, and under clothing departments. At the rear on the ground floor were the linoleum and floor cloths departments, and on the second flat were the milliners' and carpetmakers' working rooms. On the third flat were the dining rooms and servants' bedrooms, and above these was the tailors' workroom. No. 30 contained on the ground floor the hosiery, glove, ribbon, lace, print, cashmere, and silk departments; the second floor the dress and mantle show-rooms, and the top floor the dressmaking rooms. As might be expected, there are various accounts as to the origin of the fire and as to the time at which it broke out, although the reports as to the latter differ only to a slight extent. From what we have been able to ascertain flames were first seen issuing from the cutters' room

above the cellar, in the premises at the rear of No. 26, shortly after a quarter to 3 o'clock by a young man named Steer. It is, however, asserted that a French-man who was passing in the direction of Stephen's - place after half - past 2 o'clock noticed the fire, and being unacquainted with the positions of the fire-reels rushed down Hindley-street almost to West-terrace in an apparently aimless manner and therefore his services cannot be said to have been of any avail. Undoubtedly to Steer must be given the credit of having alarmed the people in the neighborhood, knowing also where No. 1 reel was stationed. He rushed down to the foreman's house, and having informed Mr. Harrison of the fire a remarkably short space of time elapsed before reels Nov. 1 and 7, which were under Mr Harrison's charge, were at the scene of the fire. It may be stated as showing the advantages arising from the system of telephonic communication in connection with the fire brigade that Mr. Harrison, who is acting as Superintendent Baker's locum tenens during that gentleman's illness, was enabled to speak the head office of the brigade and the reel stations, and thus give information to all the firemen where their services were required. It could not have been five minutes after the breaking out of the fire was reported to him before Mr. Harrison had Nos. 1 and 7 reels playing on the fire, which was then raging furiously in the back portion of shop No. 26. The firemen commenced working like Britons, and shortly afterwards a rattle of wheels accompanied by a ringing cheer announced the welcome arrival of reel No. 2 (Wedlock's), while scarcely a minute or two afterwards the North Adelaide contingent. No. 4 reel (Smith's) drew up and began to play on the burning buildings. Meanwhile Constable Adamson had despatched a messenger to the police office, and fortunately no less than twenty men were at the moment the messenger arrived reporting themselves previously to going off their eight hours of night duty. With praiseworthy promptitude Sergeant Tait got the men together, and marched them down to Rundle-street. One policeman was told off to wake up the occupants of the premises adjacent to the fire, and he carried out his duty in a most energetic manner. So determined was he to rouse up Mr. Aldridge and the other people at the Globe Hotel that he planted his truncheon through the bar window in Bundle-street. Mr. Aldridge. however, had by this time been aroused, and was engaged looking after the safety of his own premises, some of the policemen were stationed at different points to keep back the considerable crowd which, notwithstanding the earliness of the hour, had congregated and others assisted the firemen in their operations. The fire was now spreading with fearful rapidity, and the prospect was every moment becoming a more serious one. The wind was blowing from the south-west rather stiffly, and it seemed at this juncture that not only were the premises of Messrs. Marshall & Co. likely to be entirely destroyed, but that the adjoining buildings were also doomed. The fire had made considerable headway before the people who were sleeping in the buildings were aroused. The men's sleeping apartments were right over the place where the fire is supposed to have broken out, and the servants' room were on the same level in the next building, and there was communication between the two departments. It is stated that the first indication that anything was wrong was given to one of the servants, who, hearing a crackling noise as of burning wood, imagined that the ordinary fire was being lighted rather early and getting up to ascertain the cause discovered flames and smoke issuing from the doorway of the cutters' room. She immediately alarmed the inmates of the servants' sleeping apartments and then rushed into the men's sittingroom and told them that the place was on fire. Now ensued a scene of confusion. The fire was making its way into the back of the centre building, and the smoke soon became suffocating. The servants, seizing in the hurry of the moment whatever clothes they could lay their hands on, made their way with some difficulty down the stairs and into the right-of-

way and were soon out of danger. The housekeeper, Mrs Sharland, was not so fortunate. She seemed to have been stupefied by the smoke, and while descending the stairs lost her footing and fell a considerable distance. She was picked up at the bottom of the stairs in an insensible state and removed to the Globe Hotel where it was found that she had sustained an injury to her shoulder. The men in the establishment had rather a sensational escape. After having been alarmed they dressed themselves in haste and intended at first to go down by the stairway which had been availed of by the servants, but on looking out of the windows they found, in consequence of the close proximity of the fire, that it would hardly be safe to make their escape this way, and they resorted to the plan of descending from the back windows by means of a rope on to the roof of Messrs. D. & J. Fowler's shed. The rope employed was one which the young men always kept in their apartment for use in such a contingency. The whole of the sixteen men reached the ground at the cost of a few bruises and scratches, and one or two slight abrasions on the hands and legs, earned by sliding down the rope. Neither the female servants nor the men had time to save any clothing beyond that in which they escaped, and in some instances the amount carried away about their persons was rather scanty. While this scene was being enacted the firemen had made their way to various points of vantage, and a full pressure of water being obtainable most strenuous efforts were put forth to subdue the fiery element. All that could be done, however, proved of little avail, and the fire continued to progress with alarming rapidity. The back premises of No. 26, where the fire first started, were soon one mass of flames, the fire penetrating to the roof, and sending out volumes of smoke, sparks, and occasionally cinders of a considerable size. The flames extended to the front shop and also soon got a firm hold of the back portion of No. 28, or the middle shop. The position was now extremely critical, the firemen being altogether unable to cope with the fiery element, which was being fed by a very large stock of oilcloth and similar material in that part of the premises last spoken of. The wind so far from lulling had increased in force, and Mr Harrison finding it impossible to get the flames under sent for the Government-house reel and the hose from the Government printing office. Both of these quickly arrived, and were at once put to work. Mr. Aldridge was in a state of great anxiety as to the danger of his premises being fired, and had removed out of the stable all the hay stored there, which was alongside the wall of the right-of-way, and placed wet sacks at the apertures. The horses were also taken out and placed in a neighbor's stable. The breeze still continuing to increase Mr Harrison passed the word for the occupants of the Globe Hotel to look after themselves, as there was little hope of saving the building. All the females then left the hotel premises, and the bedding and other articles were packed up ready to be re-moved at once. Somewhere about this time Mr. Harrison, who was most active, met with an accident which very nearly resulted in the loss of his life. He was on one of the parapets of the Globe Hotel roof, looking after one of the hoses, when he was with a cramp in one of his legs. He called out to the men to at once relieve him, and he was almost falling off the roof when Fireman Smith stopped him, and Mr. Harrison escaped with a few scratches on the nose. The fire had now reached its greatest height, and the roar of the flames was broken by the crash of the beams of the floors and roofs as they gave way. The whole of No. 26 shop had now been pretty well gutted, and the fire was raging fiercely in No. 28, both front and back. The three-storey shop, No. 30, was also doomed to destruction and the fire soon found its way into every one of the floors and consumed all the contents except a few goods in the window and front portion on the ground floor and in the small lean-to at the back. The fears as to the safety of the Globe Hotel were by no means groundless. The flames from No. 28 building, fanned by the wind,

caught the woodwork of one of the billiard saloon windows. The water was quickly directed on to this spot and the flames were soon extinguished, but in the act two billiard tables were considerably damaged by the falling water. Almost conjointly with this mishap the walls of No. 28, alongside the right-of-way, was seen to shake, and its collapse appeared imminent. The heat had caused the wall to bulge outwards, and soon after the first indication of danger was given a large portion of the top part of the wall came with a crash into the right-of-way, some of the bricks falling on the roof of the Globe Hotel Billiard Saloon, damaging the ceiling, and others breaking the windows and falling into the room. The remainder of the wall righted itself, as the fire in some measure exhausted itself, and it was not found necessary to pull it down as was at first proposed. About 4 o'clock the wind was blowing very strongly, as will be seen when it is stated that cinders from the fire were found on Sunday morning in some parts of lower North Adelaide and at the Company's bridge. Some sensation was caused at this period by a report that Messrs. Wills & Co.'s clothing factory was on fire. It was thought, however, at first that the light seen was merely a re-reflection from the fire, but Dr. Campbell's coachman ascended by a ladder into the upper part of the building and found a small bundle of cloth smouldering. This had evidently been, lighted by a cinder from the fire falling through the window where a pane of glass was broken. Messrs. Berens Bros., whose premises are opposite those of Messrs. Wills & Co., were also greatly alarmed for the safety of their shop on account of the large showers of sparks which were falling, but happily no damages resulted. At about half-past 4 o'clock the fury of the fire had been considerably lessened and the danger to the Globe Hotel averted. It was feared at times that the store of Messrs. D. & J. Fowler, at the rear of No. 26 shop, would be caught on fire, and a close watch had to be kept in order to prevent an extension of the conflagration in this direction, as pieces of burning material were continually dropping about and igniting anything of an inflammable nature with which they came in contact. If the fire had caught this store the consequences would have been of a very serious character indeed, and the whole of the buildings in the neighborhood would have been endangered, as there was a large quantity of kerosene, candles, and other highly inflammable stuff, which would have defied all efforts at extinction if it had once become fairly ignited. Fortunately the store escaped, although it was frequently in imminent danger, and the kerosene was very soon moved out of the way. In spite of the efforts of the firemen the flames communicated with the adjacent warehouse, belonging to Messrs. Donaldson, Andrews, & Sharland, by finding its way through a skylight fixed on the top of the low-built back portion of the building. The casement of the skylight was discovered to be on fire by Mr. Harrison and P.C. Hughes, who immediately got on to the top of Messrs. Donaldson's building for the purpose of discharging water on to the flames. It was found necessary to add another length of hose, but before the additional length could be brought and adjusted the burning casement fell in with a crash, and set fire to some packages of linen which were lying almost immediately under it in the Manchester department beneath, containing besides linen a large stock of calico and flannel. Luckily about twelve thousand pounds worth of goods of a far more inflammable material were removed from the department to another part of the premises only last week. As it was, however, stock worth nearly £20,000 was damaged to the value of probably £8,000 or £9,000. The fury of the flames which threatened to lick up everything in their way, was soon arrested by the united efforts of the firemen, the men in the charge of the hose from Government House, and some friends of the firm. Before long appeared a party of men with a hose from the Government Printing Office. Mr. Shaw, a retired fireman, who was present, speedily fixed the hose into the main in Apollo-yard, which is in close proximity to the

scene of the conflagration, and together with P.C. Hughes discharged a torrent of water on to the ignited portion of the structure. The scenic effect at this stage was grand. The crystal stream spouting through an atmosphere rendered lurid by the glare of the blazing pile next door, the illuminated heavens beyond, the sound of the cracking glass, and the rapid movements of the men striving their hardest to subjugate that element which is proverbially "a bad master," combined to render the scene magnificent, and sent a thrill through every witness thereof present. The ravages of the furious element were confined to the Manchester department of the commodious premises of Messrs. Donaldson by the energy displayed by several friends of that firm. It appears that about twenty minutes past 3, the alarm having been given to the head porter of the establishment, who keeps the keys—none of the employes being permitted to sleep on the premises—he was quickly on the spot, and together with Messrs. Sim-mons, Westwood, Wright, and Waterhouse, and others, rendered valuable assistance by skilfully utilising the hose, which fortunately is possessed by the firm. Messrs. Donaldson, it appears, had taken the precaution to have a full pressure water-main fixed on the premises. Communicating with this main is a service of 1½ inch piping, running through the building from floor to floor. Attached to the piping are five nozzles, to which in case of necessity, five different hose-pipes —kept on the premises—can be fixed and used at the same time. The gentlemen in question lost no time in fixing the necessary hose, from which they vigorously discharged a plentiful supply of water over various parts of the building. They placed wet blankets at the windows on the east side of the front warehouse to prevent an entrance of the flames emanating from Messrs. Marshall's burning pile, an effort which was attended with success, although the casements were in most cases ruined. The beneficial results of so wise a precaution as the providing of this system of piping were as may be imagined, witnessed with pleasure by Mr. Andrews, the only member of the firm in town when the fire was raging, Mr. Donaldson being in England, and Mr. Sharland at Crafers. There is not the slightest doubt that if the building had not been newly erected it would have been demolished, for the old structure was too rotten ever to stand the test which the new one has. It was one of the oldest brick buildings in the colony, bricks imported from England having been used in its construction. Fortunately Messrs. Donaldson, Andrews, & Sharland are well insured. The goods in the Manchester department and other fabrics kept in other parts of the ware-house, but belonging to the department were insured in several offices for about £13,000 The following is a list of these insurance offices with the amounts of insurance: -The Phoenix (£8,000), The Queen (£5,000), The London and Lancashire (£5,000), The Imperial (£3,000), The Lion (£2,000), The Northern (£2,000), The South British (£1,000), The Standard (£3,000), The Cornwall (£3,500), The Phoenix, building and fixtures (£2,000), The Liverpool, London, and Globe (£1,000) The Australian Phoenix (£1,000), The Colonial and New Zealand (£1,000), The Transatlantic (£3,000), The Australian Alliance (£4,000), The Victorian (£3,000), The S. A. Mutual (£2,000). On passing through the building, when all signs of the existence of the fire save a few smouldering heaps of debris had ceased, the completeness of the devastation of the devouring element was only too clearly manifested. The buildings were completely gutted, an almost clear view being given from front to back of the premises. The whole of the flooring and the roof of No. 26 have fallen in, and the bare walls only are left. In No. 28 a few beams hanging very loosely and a piece of flooring near the front window are the only indications except the pieces of charred wood in the mason work to indicate that there had been any floors or roof. The wall of the four story portion of this centre shop on the inside had fallen in, and the burning debris was partially smothered by the bricks. The fire had not raged quite so fiercely in No. 'U, as a

small portion of the goods in the front of the shop were only partly burnt or soaked with water, but they were practically destroyed. In the centre of No. 26 shop were the three safes in which the books, and vouchers, and cash of the firm were kept, and considerable anxiety was felt as to the safety of their contents, but when two of them were prized open it was found that although the iron had been subjected to such intense heat that some of the loose silver in the safe had actually melted, the books, save that their covers were charred, had been well preserved, while the bank-notes and coin also remained undamaged. The other safe was taken away some time during the after-noon, to the office of Mr. Abrahams, and we are unable to say whether the books it contained were damaged or not. The stock of Messrs. Marshall & Co. is insured in various offices for about £80,000. and it is estimated that the damage done exceeded this amount by a few thousands. Messrs. Marshall & Co., we are informed, have made it a practice to insure pretty fully, but of course where such huge quantities of stock are constantly being brought in and taken out, it is impossible to always be on the safe side. The origin of the fire remains a mystery, and we have heard no theories advanced as to the way in which it was caused. There is no certainty as to the exact part of the building in which it broke out, but there is no doubt that it arose either in the cellar or on the ground floor of the back portion of No. 26 shop. The shop was closed at half-past 9 o'clock, and the last of the assistants left the premises at about half-past 10, when Mr. Allnutt, the assistant who was entrusted with the closing of the business premises, locked the door. He gave a look round the place at a quarter past 11 o'clock, and finding everything was right went to bed. The cook who was employed at the establishment said she was up till 12 o'clock, and that everything appeared to be right when she retired. Although the fire was of such an extensive nature, it must not be forgotten that but for the efforts of the members of the fire brigade much more disastrous consequences would have had to have been chronicled. The fire-men worked splendidly, and if human endeavors could have under the circumstances quelled the fiery element, they would have done so. Mr. Harrison is especially to be praised for the amount of hard work he achieved, and also for the tact which he displayed in the direction of the men in charge of the reels. A few months ago it appeared that Adelaide was likely to be without protection in case of fire, and if this conflagration results in the brigade being put on a permanent and satisfactory footing great good will have been accomplished. The police deserve a word of praise for the manner in which they preserved order during the progress of the fire, and for the assistance rendered by them in its subjugation. At a late hour on Sunday evening the debris was still smouldering, but not the slightest danger was to be anticipated. The city coroner will commence an enquiry into the origin of the fire this morning.



Rundle Street [B 6377]. Rundle Street north side, west of Stephens Place shortly after Marshalls fire which happened on March 12, 1882. James Marshall and Company were dealers in drapery and furniture and they occupied 26, 28, 30 Rundle Street. 1882. Part of Acre 45 Collection

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Thursday 16 March 1882, page 4

Presentation.— An illuminated address has been recently presented to Mr. J. Wedlock, of the Adelaide Fire Brigade, by the Adelaide Fire Insurance Association, "in grateful recognition of his meritorious services for five years as foreman of No. 2 Reel, and likewise as fireman for the preceding five years."

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Tuesday 21 March 1882, page 2

THE RUNDLE-STREET FIRE.

(Continued.)

Daniel Harrison, foreman of No. 7 fire-reel, said—I am superintendent of the fire brigade in the absence of Mr. Baker. I was called by a young man named Staer to the fire. He seemed very excited, and helped to get out the reel. This was about 45 minutes past 2. The reel left about two or three minutes after. Found the fire burning through the bottom door over the cellar and fronting Stephens-place. There was fire in other parts of the building. Found no obstruction at the plug in Stephens-place, but there was an obstruction at the plug up the lane close to the door where the fire was first observed. The fire-plug had about four inches of metal upon it, and we could not find it. We lost from five to ten minutes. We mustered twelve firemen including myself. The hose burst, and that caused a delay of five or ten minutes in playing upon Donaldson's roof. During the night two or three hoses burst. This is not usual, but do not consider the gear used on that night was in good working order. There

was a good pressure of water, but was afraid to put it on full, knowing that the hose could not stand it.

We could have saved considerably more property and prevented Donaldson's from catching fire if we had had the gear in proper order and more men. I don't know who are responsible for the gear being out of order. We could have saved more of Marshall's property if we had higher ladders. Mr. Baker, the superintendent, was very ill at the time of the fire, and consequently unable to attend. Have no idea as to the origin of the fire. Am satisfied that the fire started first at the door over the cellar opposite the lane off Stephens place. The body of the fire was there, and had got through into the cellar when we got there. By the Foreman.—All the fire-plugs that could be brought to bear were used. By a Juror.—The reels from North Adelaide, the Government Printing-Office, and Government House were used. Out of about 300 people present only two assisted. The police and Mr. Fry rendered great help. The pay for the first hour for volunteers is 2s. 6d. By Foreman.—Generally put on full pressure at drill, and the hoses have some times burst. At the fire, however, there were ½-inch nozzles and not 1-inch nozzles as used at drill. The hose from the printing-office and Government House stood well, but those under our own supervision did not. By the Hon. C. Mann—Am quite sure about the time Staer called me. The fire had got a good hold of the building, and should think it had been burning about twenty minutes when I got to the building. Took about two minutes to go to the fire. Staer gave me information of the fire at Mr. Hammer's premises on July 3, 1881, the alarm being given at a quarter to 2 in the morning. He and another also gave the alarm in the case of Wilcox's fire recently, at about 3 o'clock in the morning. Saw him at the fire at Stokes's at the East-End Market when it was nearly out. That was after 5 o'clock on the morning of February 25 last. Heard he was also at Allen's fire, but did not see him. Did not see Staer at the fire at Cox's premises near the York Hotel, or at that which occurred at the Catholic Book Depot. Staer was very much excited over Wilcox's fire, but was quieter at Marshall's, and appeared quite sober. A reward of 10s. 6d. is given to persons who first call fire reels, and Staer got this fee in the cases of Hammer's and Wilcox's fires, and received nearly £2 for calling the reel and his services at Marshall's fire. Only two or three minutes elapsed between my being called and my starting out for the fire. By the Hon. J. C. Bray — I feel satisfied that the fire started in that part of the building from which I first saw flames issuing. By Mr. Symon — Donaldson's premises caught fire about half an hour after I had been at work on the fire. I was on the roof at the time, and gave a hose which had just been fixed on to the clubhouse plug to a policeman, who played on the skylight, which was burning, The hose burst, and a delay of ten minutes occurred. The flames were fully fifty feet above Marshall's building at this time, and the wind was blowing from the south-west. Got the Government-house hose to work in Apollo-place, and then the hose on the roof was fixed up again. If the hose on the roof had not burst we should have saved a great deal more of Donaldson's premises. The skylight was about twenty feet from Marshall's wall.

The next witness called was William Staer, who first called the fire-reel, and as there were one or two suspicious circumstances connected with his behavior the coroner informed him that he need not give any answer that would criminate himself. The witness said—I live on North-terrace, ten doors east of Pulteney street. I live with my parents, and was working at the Exhibition on the Saturday before the fire. My employers would not take me on again on Monday because I did not go back at the proper time. Was working till nearly 11 o'clock on Saturday night, and then went up to the Tavistock Hotel with a man named Joseph Roach

and two other men who had been working at the Exhibition. Had a drink there, and went on to the York, reaching it just at closing time. Had another drink, and proceeded to Klauer's in Hindley-street, meeting some more friends there. Had two drinks there, and went back to Rundle-street, and stayed at Moss's Corner for half an hour. Then proceeded as far as Gawler-place, where we stood for some time. Roach and I afterwards went down Gawler-place and along Grenfell-street to King William-street, and turned down Pirie-street at Eagle Chambers, proceeded as far as the brewery, and then left Roach and came along to Pulteney-street. This was about 2 o'clock. Saw a policeman at the Scotch Church, on North-terrace, and after giving him a match walked down the terrace as far as Dr. Way's or Dr. Gosse's. The policeman left me then, saying he had to meet someone at the corner, and would catch me up again coming back. Waited there a little time, and then went as far as Dr. Campbell's, afterwards moving on to the other side of Stephens-place, and waiting there a minute or two. Was proceeding a few steps along the terrace past Stephens-place, when I heard a cry of "fire," and turned back. Saw some persons rushing round the Globe corner, and noticed a reflection on Birks's wall, and the smoke rising at the back of Marshall's furniture warehouse. Then ran along North-terrace as fast as I could to Mr. Harrison's. Did not intend to go to bed, but was going down to visit a friend who was on watch at the Exhibition. In the case of Wilcox's fire I was awakened by a man named John Opie, who was sleep-ing with me, but I was the first to see Hammer's fire, as I was undressing on coming home late. Did not go to Allen's fire, but saw the premises of Stokes and Scott after the fires had taken place. Did not have anything to drink after leaving Klauer's and was not drunk. I told the policeman had been asleep in the afternoon, though I had not, and also think I told him I had been drinking. Was not standing outside of Marshall's premises at 1 o'clock on Sunday morning, and did not go to the King of Han-over. Was working at the Exhibition from the Thursday till the Saturday before the fire. Had been employed by my brother about six months before, but had been away in the country recently. Was in town about a month before the fire doing odd jobs, and only earned 3s., but my mother gave me some money.

By Jurors—Knew there was a premium for persons giving alarms to the fire reels, and that is why I ran so fast to Harrison's. Got 5s. at Wilcox's fire for assisting the firemen, and at Hammer's I got 10s. 6d. for giving the alarm. I got £1 18s. 6d. in connection with Marshall's fire, 10s. 6d. for giving the alarm, and the balance for assistance.

Joseph Roach, barman, living in Carrington-street, said:—I was employed at the Exhibition ground on Saturday week, and left there shortly before 11 o'clock on Saturday night with Staer and two others. We had drinks at the Tavistock and Cohen's Hotels, and I believe at the York, and then went to Klauer's, where we had several more. Then came back to Moss's corner, and to Gawler-place, and then Staer and I went down Gawler-place as far as Pirie-street, and I left Staer at 2 o'clock near the Hind-marsh Hotel, and went home. Staer was not drunk when I left him. Do not know Mullaney and did not go with Staer in front of Marshall's or to the King of Hanover.

Sydney Wardell, police-constable, said—I was on duty on North-terrace on Sunday morning, March 12. Saw Staer at the corner of Pulteney-street and North-terrace at twenty past 2 o'clock. He came down Pulteney-street on the west side, and appeared to have been running and to be slightly under the influence of drink. Asked him what brought him out at that time, and he said he had been sleeping all the afternoon up to 8 o'clock and did not feel inclined to go to bed and that he had been drinking with some friends. He said he was working at the Exhibition. He walked down the terrace with me as far as Stephens-place,

where I left him and went on to the guardhouse, as I was going off duty at 3 o'clock. Did not intend to come back. Saw no sign of fire, nor did I see any people about. Heard of the fire when I got to the station at 3 o'clock. Left Staer standing at the corner of Stephen-place. Never saw Staer before to my knowledge.

Alexander Wallace, police constable, said—I know Staer and a man named Mullaney, and saw them standing near the Globe, in Rundle-street, at 1 o'clock on Sunday morning, March 12. Walked down as far as Fitch's Corner, and on coming back saw Staer and Mullaney go under the archway at the King of Hanover Hotel. Staer has not a very good character, and have not known him to do any work for the last two years. Have seen him about town at all hours, but do not know of his presence at other fires. Mullaney and Staer were accompanied by another man, who had hair round his face. It was not Roach.

John W. Dyer, watchman, said—I am watchman for a great many shopkeepers, including Messrs. Marshall & Co. First saw their premises on the Saturday night before the fire at about 11 o'clock, and examined the back premises at about ten minutes past 2, when all appeared right. Heard the alarm of fire at about a quarter to 3 o'clock, when I was in Grenfell-street. Came to the fire as soon as possible, and saw it was raging in the back part of the building. Went for Mr. Davis, the watchmaker, not knowing he was in England, and also for one of Mr. Donaldson's men, and found he had been warned. Found no loafers about the lane on Saturday night, but have seen loafers there frequently.

Frederick William Allnutt, draper's assistant, said—I live on the premises at Marshall's, and it is my duty to lock up the premises every alternate week, and I had charge of the keys when the fire broke out. I went to bed at a quarter past 11 o'clock on the night before the fire, and all the men were in bed when I retired. I went all round the premises and examined every room at half past 10 o'clock, and turned off the gas at the meters in the shops, and locked up the shops at that time. The last meter in the shop that I turned off was in the cellar underneath the reserve room, and I turned this off at half-past 10. Gas is supplied through this meter to the cellar, the cutter's room, and the room above, and the top of No. 26 shop. Noticed no smell of fire when I went to bed. Did not go into the bedrooms, but enquired, and was told that all the men were in. There were no lights in any of the rooms when I went to bed. I turned off the gas in the sleeping apartments and locked up just before a quarter past 11 o'clock. Was disturbed at 3 o'clock on Sunday morning by the screams of Ellen McDougall who said the place was on fire. Jumped up and looked out and saw the fire coming out of the door of the cutter's room and the door above.

The females had got out of the way, but the housekeeper was somewhat hurt. Six of us had to get out of the back window by a rope on to Fowler's roof before we had time to dress. Have had charge of the keys for two and a half years and have never heard of any one using candles on the premises for reading or writing purposes, but saw the candles found in Mrs. Head's room.

Any one can get out of the inhabited part of the building, but they cannot open the door from outside without a key. There are no duplicate keys so far as I am aware, and I believe I had possession of all the keys in my charge when the fire took place. Believe the fire started in the cutter's room, because of the great body of flame that was issuing from it, but there was nothing wrong with the room when I left it. The cutter usually leaves at about 10 o'clock on Saturday, and he left at that time on the Saturday before the fire. He is a steady man, and smokes, but not on the premises. There were no piles of waste paper in the cutter's

room. Have no idea as to the cause of the fire, and know of no person who has ill-will against the firm. The men could come in and out by the hoist, and also in and out by the door by arrangement with each other. Did not smell any gas on the night before the fire There were no matches kept in the cutter's room. I use a bullseye lantern, in which burn colza oil, for inspection purposes.

By Foreman—Left the lantern in our sitting-room on Saturday night. Should have noticed it if there had been anything smouldering in the shop. The young men have sometimes let persons into the sleeping apartments. The inmates of the house could use the bullseye lantern to light them down-stairs in the night.

By Jurors—There was nothing inflammable near the door of the cutter's room. A man could put a match under the door, but not his arm. The staircase to our apartments is ; of rough timber. Have never known young men to light themselves downstairs with matches.

By the Hon. C. Mann—The meter on the stairs leading to our sleeping-rooms supplies the kitchen, and this was turned out with the rest. The only place the gas could burn was in the pipe before it reached the meter.

By Mr. Yuill—The key of the door of the cutting-room was a common one, and could be easily duplicated. The door could not be opened on either side without a key.

By the Coroner—No inflammable liquids were kept on the drapery premises. There is no entrance at the back of Parkin's old shop.

Richard George Thompson, cutter at Messrs. Marshall & Co.'s, said—I was at work in my room on Saturday afternoon and evening up till between 9.30 and 10 o'clock. Then left the premises and did not return. Never smoke on the premises. Use a great deal of paper for patterns, of which I had about 100 in my room hung up on three pegs. There is a gasalier in my room. Do not use it for hanging clothes on. There is no other light than gas used in my department. A boy usually lit the gas with a wax taper, but on the evening before the fire I lit it myself with a safety match. Have no idea as to the cause of the fire.

By the Hon. C. Mann—A man might have been able to put a newspaper under the door of my room facing the lane. There was about half an inch space under the door.

The inquest was adjourned at 5.30 until next morning at 10 o'clock.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Tuesday 21 March 1882, page 2

THIS DAY.

The inquest on the fire at Marshall & Co.'s was continued at Parr's auction mart by the city coroner (Mr. T. Ward, J.P.), on Tuesday, March 21. Mr. W. Symon appeared for Messrs. Donaldson, Andrews, & Sharland; Mr. Fleming for Messrs. Marshall & Co.; and the Hon. J. C. Bray for the Phœnix Insurance Co. Mr. I. Simmons was foreman of the jury.

James Windimill Porter, a member of the firm of Marshall & Co., said—On Saturday night I left the premises at about 10.20. Everything appeared to be safe as usual. Did not go through the cutter's room, but everything in that direction looked all right. I live at McKinnon-parade, North Adelaide, and was aroused at about half-past 3 on Sunday morning by one of our drivers, whom I sent on to Mr. Fry's. Arrived at the fire a little before 4 o'clock. The fire was then burning fiercest where the linoleum was kept. This was on account of the

nature of the material, I was the first member of the firm at the fire, and have no idea as to how it occurred beyond having entertained suspicions about the Reids. Have known some of the inmates on the premises come in ten minutes or a quarter of an hour after the doors were supposed to be locked. Don't know if any of them ever came home suffering from drink.

The coroner here stated that he had received a report from the police, who had made every possible enquiry, with regard to the Reids, and were satisfied that Reid went to bed early on Saturday night, March 11, and did not get up till the usual time on the Sun-day morning. They also reported that the daughter and the mother were in gaol at the time.

Witness continued—I think our insurances will barely cover our loss. Nothing inflammable in the shape of spirits is kept in the cutter's room. By the foreman—The gas was lit at about half-past 6 on Saturday night. If there had been any fire smouldering it would have been discovered in the locking up. By a juror—The rope by which some of the hands escaped was kept to be utilised in the event of fire. There was always a recognised danger of that, and the rope was thoughtfully kept." By Mr. Symons—There was only one set of keys to the cutter's room, and that was kept by the locker-up. Could not say whether the door of the room could be opened from the inside without a key ; perhaps it might be. By Mr. Grundy—There would be means of escape for persons inside the premises if they set the fire alight. They could go out by a window at the back of No. 28. To escape by way of the main shop from the cutter's room was impossible, because the intermediate doors were locked. There were two locks on the door. Chubb's lock might be opened from the inside, but the carpenter's lock could not be so opened. Some of the persons who escaped on the night of the fire came down by the staircase. There is no connection between the cutter's room and the private part of the house. By Mr. Symon—The window at the back of No. 28, just above the ladies' accommodation room, was found unfastened on Sunday morning.

It was not open, but unfastened. A man could not get by way of this window to No. 28 with out having to break open either one of two rooms. By Mr. Fleming—A man escaping from the window at the back of No. 28 would have to drop about twelve feet to reach the ground unless, he had a ladder. By Mr. Yuill—The goods nearest the cutter's room consisted principally of haberdashery, hosiery, and shirts.

Ellen McDougall, single woman, formerly living on the premises of Messrs. Marshall and Co., said—I was a domestic servant in the employ of the firm. Went to bed on the night before the fire about half-past 11 o'clock. The gas was out, and I went to bed in the dark. Do not keep a candle in our room. There might have been a box of matches in the room, but if so they were safety's. Mary Hall and myself had not been sleeping in our usual room for several nights, but in the dining-room. We did this owing to the heat of the weather. Mary Hall had no candles when she went to bed on the night before the fire. I have been in the employ of Messrs. Marshall & Co. for some months, but have never used a candle, nor do I think has Mary Hall. Was awake by a crackling noise some time after 2 o'clock. Arose and went to the dining-room, where I saw the reflection of a fire apparently situated by the cutter's room. Gave the alarm to the cook and the other young women, and the young men who were also employed on the premises heard the call. After screaming out "Fire" I obtained a dress, and with the other girls then went downstairs. Just before descending I saw the flames rising from the cutter's room. There was no fire on the stairs until we had passed the middle stairs, when flames came through a glass door a little above the cutter's room. We all escaped

safely, but the housekeeper, who was the last, had to be carried down. The clock struck three soon after we got into the street. There was no light burning in any of the girls' rooms.

The coroner—Have you heard any opinion expressed by any of the young girls or men as to how the fire started? Witness—Never. The coroner—Do you know of any one having any ill-will against Messrs. Marshall and Co. Witness—No.

By the foreman—All the girls were in their nightdresses when the alarm I gave brought them out. The dining-room was between the shop and my bedroom. Am sure that when I heard the crackling sound it was not at the end of the dining-room. It came from the outside. Was asleep from the time I went to bed to the time the crackling sound awoke me. By Mr. Yuill—The flames were outside the cutter's room, when we got down. The carpet-room is above the cutter's room. By the coroner—Mrs. Sharland, the housekeeper, had I believed gone to bed before I retired on Saturday night. There are two doors on the middle staircase, one leading into the milliner's department, and the other facing outside, towards the carpet-room. It was from the latter that I saw the flames coming out. By a juror—These rooms were on the first landing. By Mr. Grundy—Heard the young men moving about after I called out "Fire !" Did not hear any one go down before the alarm was given. Whent I met the young men in the street after coming down I do not think any of them were fully dressed.

Mary Hall, a single woman, said—I am housemaid at Messrs. Marshall & Co.'s. Went to bed at half-past 11 o'clock on Saturday night with Ellen McDougall. Neither of us had a lighted candle. There were no matches in our room. Went to sleep soon after going to bed, and was awoke by Ellen McDougall, who told me that the place was on fire. Arose directly, Ellen being already up. None of the girls had time to get dressed. The stairs were unpleasantly warm when we came down the stairs and saw the fire through one of the glass doors in the direction of the cutter's room. Do not know anything as to the origin of the fire.

Have chatted since the fire with my fellow-servants on the subject, but none of them told me how it arose. The young men stop out late sometimes, and in order to get in they have to go to Mr. Allnut. Know of no way by which they could otherwise get in. By the foreman—Did not hear any of the young men call out for Mr. Allnut on the Saturday night. Did so on one previous occasion.

(Left Sitting.)

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Wednesday 22 March 1882, page 3

THE RUNDLE-STREET FIRE.

Continued from yesterday.

Mary Hall, a single woman, said—I am housemaid at Messrs. Marshall & Co.'s. Went to bed at half-past 11 o'clock on Saturday night with Ellen McDougall. Neither of us had a lighted candle. There were no matches in our room. Went to sleep soon after going to bed, and was awoke by Ellen McDougall, who told me that the place was on fire. Arose directly, Ellen being already up. None of the girls had time to get dressed. The stairs were unpleasantly warm when we came down the stairs and saw the fire through one of the glass door's in the direction of the cutter's room. Do not know anything as to the origin of the fire. Have chatted since the fire with my fellow-servants on the subject, but none of them told me how it arose. The young men stop out late sometimes, and in order to get in they have to go to Mr. Allnutt. Know of no way by which they could otherwise get in. By the foreman—Did not

hear any of the young men call out for Mr. Allnutt on the Saturday night. Did so on one previous occasion. The front door was open when I got down-stairs. I was downstairs first, and at first saw no one except two young men, who asked whether all the inmates were down. The clock struck three about half an hour after I went downstairs. By Mr. Grundy—Would not know the young men again. They were dressed in dark clothes. On getting into Stephen's-place saw the fire in the cutter's room. Did not notice the cutter's door. The glass-door half way down the stairs was shut. Saw no flames coming out of the cutter's door, the fire at that time being confined to the inside of the cutter's room. Do not know whether the young-men burn candles or not.

Jane Brown, widow, said—I was cook at Messrs. Marshall & Co.'s premises, at which I slept on the night before the fire. Retired about half-past eleven, but did not go to bed until twelve. Turned off the gas in the kitchen before I went to bed. Retired to my bed in the dark not being allowed to burn candles. Except on one occasion—in Mrs. Read's room—I never saw a candle alight in any of the rooms. Was awake by hearing Ellen McDougall calling out " Jane, get up ; the place is on fire." I arose immediately and told her to call the others, which she did. She next called out across the dining-room to Mr. Evans that the place was on fire. She went back to the dining-room where she and Mary Hall were sleeping. Mary Hall was awake. Passed through the dining-room first. Mrs. Sharland fell over a chair in the dining-room. I took her hand and led her to the top of the stairs, went down three steps with her when I felt the smoke overpowering me, and letting go her hand, she fell to the bottom of the flight. We had to step over her to get down the stairs the best way we could. Directly on getting outside I noticed the flames for the first time. They were proceeding out of the cutter's room from the fan-light at the top of the window. Some young man met us near the lane, and we told him that Mrs. Sharland was still on the premises. While we were speaking a policeman came up, and the two men then went up and brought Mrs. Sharland down. She was very ill, and was taken to the Globe Hotel. Do not know what was the origin of the fire. Did not smell any thing burning when I retired to rest. The windows were open on account of the heat. Believe the fire started in the cutter's room. I was never in that room. Have conversed with my fellow-servants about the fire, but learned nothing as to how it originated. Mrs. Sharland went to bed rather late that night. Do not know whether she burned a candle in her room or whether the young men ever burned candles in their rooms. A young man named Norvey came home late one night. By the jury—Do not know who went down and opened the door first. Mary Hall was the first to go down.

Henry Rebbeek, storeman at Marshall and Co.'s, said—I slept on the premises, at the northern end, in room No. 6. Went to bed about 10.45 p.m. on the Saturday before the fire. Was one of the first to retire. The gas was not turned off when I went to bed. There was no smell of fire. Do not remember who was the last of the men to go to bed. Have been in these rooms about six months, and never saw a candle lit in this place. Most of the men, I believe, smoke tobacco. Have known one or two young men to be out late on occasions and let in, but this has but rarely occurred. We can get out when we want, and it would be possible for one to be let out and in again. The first time I stirred after going to bed was when a young man named Isaacs called me up with a cry of "fire." Immediately arose and put on my trousers and boots. The other young men being up, I said, " let us try the stairs," and directly went down. I opened the door into the lane and went out towards the police-station. Was met by a policeman in Stephens-place. He told me it was all right ; the alarm had been given. While going down the stairs I saw tongues of flame coming out of the sit-

ting-room door, which was above the carpet-room. On my getting outside I saw the flames over the cutter's door. They were burning fiercely. Did not notice the fire any where else. Knocked at the furniture warehouse and asked Williams, who slept there, to get the hose out. Meanwhile I went up the stairs again to the sitting-room and cried out, "Is there any one here?" There was no reply. The smoke was very dense, and the fire still seemed to be in the cutter's room, the flames coming out of the door. Believe the fire started there. When I came down the stairs I found that the housekeeper had been dragged out, and the policeman took the hose and played water on to the fire. The reels came about twenty minutes afterwards, and I gave my assistance to the firemen. There was a delay of from twenty minutes to half an hour in finding the principal plug. The firemen had no crowbar with them, and I got one from Marshall's. Did not see the hose burst. Have no idea as to how the fire occurred. The men have been talking over the subject, and the general opinion is that the fire started in the cutter's room. As to the cause, they have arrived at no conclusion. It has been suggested that the fire might have been caused by the gas in the cutter's room igniting something, or by some one smoking in that room. By Mr. Yuill—Do not think the cutter's door was on fire. By the coroner —Have seen the cutter smoking in the street, but never in his room.

Richard George Thompson, the cutter, re-called, said—On Saturday I was cutting. I was cutting direct from the cloth, using no patterns. Never use a smoothing-iron, and have never had one brought into my department since the first week of my employment at Marshall & Co.'s. Did not notice any one smoking on Saturday evening, and would have noticed had any one been smoking. I would have pointed out had I observed any one smoking that that is not allowed; have done so on several occasions. Could not swear that no one was smoking in the after-noon because I was in the workshop at times, and it is quite possible that a person might put his pipe down without my noticing it. Am quite sure I did not light my pipe or a cigar before I left the room on Saturday evening. Had no pipe, cigar, or cigarettes in my possession on Saturday. Being late when I left home in the morning I forgot to bring any pipe with me. Have not the slightest idea as to how the fire occurred. To the right of the door there was a piece of curtain close to the fixings, and containing cotton and hosiery goods. This was nailed to the floor and might have caught fire. It was the only material touching the ground. The curtain was of some cotton material, but whether calico, or canvas I could not say ; it was very dirty.

Robert Read, now of Liverpool-street, Adelaide, out of business, said—On the Saturday night before the fire at Marshall & Co.'s, I was at home in North Adelaide. Went to bed about half-past 7 o'clock that night. Was in Adelaide on the Monday after the fire. I was in Adelaide on the Saturday before the fire, and the last time before that was when I called on Mr. Taylor about my wife's clothes. I asked for my wife's and daughter's clothes. Mr. Taylor said he could not give them up. There was an account due against my wife for over £5, and until this was paid he said he would not give the clothes up. I was a little annoyed, and felt a "turmoil of spirits," but we had no high words. Said I would consult a solicitor and make him give up the clothes, but I used no threats. Came to town on the Saturday before the fire in order to get bail for my daughter on that day. Bethia Read, daughter of the last witness, gave corroborative evidence, and stated that her father, who went to bed about 7.30 p.m., did not get up till half-past 8 o'clock on Sunday morning.

Henry Lilley, coachman, in the employ of Dr. Philips, said that at about 2.30 a.m. on Sunday, while he was sleeping in the surgery on North-terrace, he was awoke by a screaming sound,

and arose. He saw a reflection of a fire, and running round to the premises of Messrs. Marshall & Co., found that they were on fire. He saw the flames coming out of the bottom part of the door facing the lane. With a constable he went upstairs to assist in bringing Mrs. Sharland down from the first landing. She appeared unconscious.

William Taylor, one of the firm of Messrs. Marshall & Co., recalled, said—The signature to the proposal (produced) to the Transatlantic Fire Insurance Company for £2,000, dated March 1, is that of our agent, Mr. James Mackie. Did not furnish Mr. Mackie with a list of our insurances, as he knew them himself. The list of insurances mentioned in the proposal does not appear to be correct. The amount in the Imperial Company is set down here at £1,400 ; it should be either £12,000 or £14,000. Since the 1st of March, with renewals, we have re-insured for £14,000. Did not furnish the list of insurances appearing in the newspapers. On the 1st of March our insurance in the Imperial was, I believe, £14,000, and in the Northern Company £3,000, and on account of the office not reducing the rate we transferred £8,000 to several other companies. There is, I believe, simply a mistake of a nought in the figures given in this list. On March 1 I believe, we insured in the City Mutual, for £1,500 ; it might have been the day after-wards, Did not increase our insurances, I think, after March 1. In my evidence yesterday I made a mistake in saying that we had insured for £4,000 or £5,000 more during the last two or three months than the amount previously. I find we increased our insurances only by £1,500.

George Rolland, driver, said—I am employed by Messrs. Marshall & Co., and sleep in the furniture warehouse. Went to bed about 11 p.m. on Saturday. Did not notice any smell of burning material. Was awake about half-past 2 o'clock in the morning by the screams of the girls, and on getting up found the premises on fire. The flames appeared to be coming out of the cutter's room. Saw none but my fellow-employees about, some of these being but scantily dressed. Can form no opinion as to the origin of the fire.

At this stage the enquiry was further adjourned until next morning at 10 o'clock.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Friday 24 March 1882, page 4

Fire in Rundle-street.— The Tavistock Buildings in Rundle-street east had a narrow escape from destruction by fire shortly after midnight. The most easterly tenement, occupied by Mr. J. O'Leary as a boarding-house, became at the hour mentioned suffused with smoke, and on the inmates searching for the cause it was discovered that a quantity of old rags and other things that had been stowed away in a little cellar towards the back of the premises, was on fire, and had already begun to burn through a narrow staircase leading to the ground floor. The fire brigade was at once sent for, and No. 7 Reel was soon on the spot, followed by No. 2. It took very little time to extinguish the flames, and not much damage was done. The cause of the fire seems to be a mystery. While the Brigade were engaged here some one raised an alarm that there was a fire behind the Academy of Music, but on proceeding there with No. 2 Reel the men found they had been hoaxed.

Adelaide Observer (SA : 1843 - 1904), Saturday 25 March 1882, page 36

THE FIRE AT MARSHALL & CO.'S

THE INQUEST.

Mr. Ward, the City Coroner, empanelled a Jury at the Globe Hotel on Monday, March 13. to enquire into the circumstances of the fire at Marshall & Co.'s and Donaldson, Andrews, & Sharland's premises.

Mr. I. Simmons was chosen Foreman of the Jury, and besides the representatives of the Insurance Companies interested, there were present—Mr. W. Symon, who appeared for Messrs. Donaldson, An-drews, & Sharland, and the Transatlantic Insurance Company ; Mr. Grundy for the Hon. J. Hodgkiss ; and Mr. Fleming for Messrs. Marshall & Co. Having spent nearly an hour in examining the burnt premises, the Jury returned to the Globe Hotel, where the following evidence was taken:—

John August Adamson, police-constable, stationed at Adelaide, said—I was on duty in Rundle-street on Sunday morning, March 12, and at about a few minutes before 3 o'clock I heard a man cry out some-thing, but I could not catch what. I turned round and at the corner of the Globe Hotel I met a man who sang out fire, and turning into Stephens-place I saw a reflection on Birks's wall. I went down the right-of-way to the back of Marshall's, and saw the fire blazing out of a window. I believe that there were three windows in the top story of the premises. There were about a dozen people in the right-of-way, who, I was told, were sleeping on the building. This is the only place I saw fire. I went on duty at 10 o'clock on Saturday night. I sent a man away at once from King William-street to report the fire to the Police Station, and in about four minutes I returned to the scene of the fire, and it was burning away more fiercely than at first, and in the same part of the building as before. I noticed no fire anywhere else. There were more people in the right-of-way by this time, and the young men who had escaped told me that there were others upstairs. My informants were only partly dressed, and they told me there was an old lady upstairs. I went up the stairs, and found two young men trying to carry her down from the top. The fire was not near the stair then, but the place was full of smoke. The fire was above where they were, and further west. With the assistance of another constable we brought her down, and I then asked if there were anybody else in the place, and I was told not. The fire-reels arrived in about a quarter of an hour after I sent to the Police Station, and a number of people had also assembled around. There was a delay of several minutes on the part of the brigade in finding the plug nearest the burning premises, and the water supply was scarcely good. I thought the hose was too small. No. 1 Reel came first, and the others quickly followed. I made enquiries as to who first saw the fire, and was told Ellen McDougall, a servant in the employment of Marshall and Co. I remained at the fire till it was nearly put out, at 6 o'clock.

To the Foreman—I was near the Red Lion Hotel, going towards King William-street, when I heard the man sing out. On passing Stephens-place previously I saw no signs of fire. To the Jury—I found the door leading from the lane to the staircase open. After I had given the alarm Ellen McDougall told me she had alarmed the inmates of the building. I went upstairs to discover if there was anybody else in the rooms after being told there was no one there. I went on the second story as far as I could see through the smoke.

To Mr. Yuill (representative of several Insurance Companies)— When going to King William-street to give the alarm I saw no reflection on coming back. To the Coroner—In the hurry I did not take the name of the man whom I first heard sing out "Fire."

To Lance-corporal Hammill—The man said he belonged to Marshall's premises, and he was only partly dressed. To the Jury—I did not meet any one coming from the fire who was fully dressed. The enquiry was then adjourned till Monday March 20.

The City Coroner (Mr. T. Ward, J.P.), continued the inquest on the late fire at Messrs. James Marshall & Co.'s premises at Parr's Old Exchange room, King William-street, on Monday, March 20.

Mr. I. Simmons was Foreman of the Jury. Mr. W. Symon appeared on behalf of Messrs. Donaldson, Andrews, & Sharland and the Transatlantic Fire Insurance Company; Mr. E. B. Grundy for the Hon. J. Hodgkiss; Mr. T. W. Fleming for Messrs. Marshall & Co. ; Hon. C. Mann, Q.C. (Crown Solicitor), for the police; and Hon. J. C. Bray for the Phoenix Company.

William Taylor, of the firm of Marshall & Co., drapers, said—We had a fire on our premises in Rundle-street on Sunday week. I left them at half past 2 o'clock on the previous Saturday, and first heard of the fire at half-past 3 o'clock on the Sunday morning. I live at Parkside, and one of our porters, Peter Dwyer, gave the alarm. The fire has been a very destructive one, and at present we estimate the damage done at about £60,000. We are insured for about £80,000 on our whole premises and stock, but our furniture warehouse was not touched by the fire. I have no idea how it originated. When I arrived on the scene the back premises were burning. I saw the flames coming out of the windows facing the lane leading into Stephens-place. I went round to the front, and found the fire making its way from the back to the front of the clothiers' shop, No. 26.

No. 28 was burning at the same time as No. 26. Our cutter, named Thomson, worked in the reserve room, where I first saw the fire. There were inflammable goods in the room. I have no reason to suppose Thomson is intemperate. I have known him always a steady man. We allow no smoking on the premises, and I never saw him smoking there. The first suggestion that came to my mind as to the origin of the fire was that it was the work of the husband of our late housekeeper, whom we have just prosecuted—a Mrs. Reid. She is now in gaol awaiting trial. I never heard her or her daughter make any threats. The daughter was also prosecuted by us, and is, I believe, out on bail. Before this prosecution they always seemed respectable people. The husband was also brought before the Police Court and acquitted, and a few days after he came to us and asked for his wife's clothes, and we told him we had suffered enough from Mrs. Reid, and would not give them up until she paid an account she owed us.

He seemed very much annoyed at our answer, and said he would compel us to give them up. He got out of temper, but used no bad language or threats. I have not heard or seen him since. He had a younger daughter with him when he came to the shop.

I do not think any other of our employes have any bad feeling towards us. The keys of the premises are kept week and week about by Messrs. Allnutt and Evans. They have strict orders as to the sole use of the keys and to turn off the gas. They look round the premises when this is done by the light of a bullseye lantern. This was done on the night before the fire at 11 o'clock. I have no other suggestions to make. We are doing a good business.

To the Jury—The cutter leaves about 10 o'clock on Saturday nights. There are some bedrooms in the top flat at the back of No. 26. I believe the fire began in the cutter's room on the ground floor. The gas in the bedrooms was turned out at 11 o'clock, and candles were prohibited in the house. It was only lit by gas. There was nothing to justify the inmates having a light or fire after 11 o'clock. Extra cooking on Saturday night might cause the extinguishing of the gas to be a little later. The insurance policies amounted to £58,000 on the stock, buildings, and fittings destroyed. The furniture remains intact. I have enquired

whether the premises were locked up as usual on the Saturday night, and was in-formed that they were. I do not know how the bullseye lantern is lighted. The partners in the firm have no set of keys, and the employes who hold them both sleep on the premises.

To the Coroner—There was a large cooking-stove on the flat 25 feet above where I first observed the fire. We have never had any trouble with it. We have had the business since August, 1879, and have not taken stock during the time. It is unusual for a huge firm like ours to conduct business like that.

To the Jury—We intended to take stock last August, but the Exhibition made us so busy that we were prevented from doing so. Our books will furnish a pretty correct account of what our stock should be. I cannot positively say that any of the assistants living on the premises were ever out after 11 p.m.

To Mr. Grundy—I think the insurance on the buildings, Nos. 26 and 30, amounted to £2,500. We have nothing on No. 28. To Mr. Symon—We insured in the Transatlantic Company for £2,000 on our stock on the first of this month. The insurance on all the stock destroyed is £53,500, the value of which we have not yet made up. We based our insurance on our returns and purchases. I effected the insurance in the Transatlantic Company through Mr. Mackie. It was the last we made. I saw the agent (Mr. Kingsborough), and showed him over the premises. I do not think any reference was made as to the value of the stock. He was not there more than ten minutes.

To Mr. Mann—The cutter's room was about two feet above the level of the ground. I could not say positively, but there might be a quarter of an inch of space between the bottom of the door and the floor of the rooms. There are fire gas meters on the premises.

To Mr. Yuill—There is no store in the cutter's room. There is no communication between this room and the sleeping apartments. We have in-creased our insurances, I believe, to the extent of £5,000 or £6,000 during the last few months, as we thought our stock increased. Our fittings were also insured.

To the Coroner—We heat the tailors' irons by means of a gas stove at the top of No. 28. We both import direct and buy here.

To Mr. Yuill—Our senior partner has gone home on business and pleasure combined, and is not expected back till September next.

To the Jury—There were two doors leading into the cutter's room—one from the shop and one from Stephens-place. Safety matches were the only kind used on the premises. The tailors usually leave from 8 to 9 o'clock on Saturday nights.

Henry Thomas Fry, one of the firm of Marshall and Co., drapers, said—I left our premises at 10 o'clock on the night before the fire, everything being then apparently secure. Mr. Allnut was left in charge. I first heard of the fire from one of the porters at about a quarter to 4 o'clock on Sunday morning. He came to my residence in Childers-street, North Adelaide, and on being alarmed I ran into town, arriving at the fire at two minutes past 4 o'clock. The fire was burning in No. 26, at the back, the roof being alight, and the back of No. 28 was also on fire. It was all in a blaze. I am not able from my own observation at that time, to give an opinion as to where the fire started, as it had advanced too much. The cutter's room was burning. I remained on the scene till 8 a.m. We have never had a fire, not even a small one, on our premises before. The thought that exists in my mind is that the premises were set fire

to maliciously. I had a suspicion that parties whom we had prosecuted might be guilty. It would have been comparatively easy, if a person had the time, to cut the glass in the fanlight above the door leading into the cutter's room from Stephens-place, and so set fire to the premises. I do not think we have an enemy in Adelaide other than, perhaps, the parties referred to. The use of candles is prohibited, but we have found them in the place. We found about sixty half-burnt candles in Mrs. Reid's room. We have never had any assistant reported for breaking this rule. I do not think our insurances will cover our losses after selling the salvage.

To the Jury—My idea about the candles in Mrs. Reid's room was that she used them to light her work if she sat up late, and that their semi-consumption was only an evidence of her improvident habits. There was none of the Reid family on the premises at the time of the fire. From eighteen to twenty-one assistants were there, including five or six girls. None of them could get out to get a glass of beer without going into Mr. Allnutt's room for the key ; at least I believe so. We allow no drink on the premises.

To Mr. Bray—I have no special reason for believing that the place was set fire to. I assume so. There were about fifty persons present when I arrived at the fire. I heard the Fire Brigade call for assistance from volunteers, but I only knew of my self and another responding.

To the Coroner—I do not think there were a sufficient number of firemen to cope with a large fire, and their apparatus was in a disgraceful condition. The hose burst several times, and on one occasion caused a delay of 20 minutes before it could be replaced. The brigade were working grandly.

To Mr. Yuill—We have been increasing our stock lately, which accounts for the increase of our insurance. It would be Mr. Allnutt's duty to go through the premises and lock them up the night before the fire.

To Mr. Grundy—He is the only person who should have had the keys. Any two persons might get down into the lane leading into Stephens-place by means of a lift and return again, but the lift makes a great noise usually. I do not think it was used by any of the employes to escape from the fire, as the floor was burnt. Some of them escaped from a window, overlooking Fowler's roof. Any assistant out late would have to knock up Mr. Allnutt to get in.

To Mr. Yuill—I do not know the value of the stock in the cellar, but the salvage there could have been got at if the walls had not been pulled down in part.

To the Jury—I cannot say what the value of our whole stock was on the first of this month.

To Mr. Bray—I do not think any walls were pulled down for which orders were not given. We received a letter from Mr. Cotton, as agent for one Insurance Company, protesting against the pulling down of the walls.

To the Jury — My particular duty is to look after the fancy, silk, and dress departments. The dressmakers heat their irons at the top of No. 30.

Daniel Harrison, foreman of No. 7 Reel, in charge of the Fire Brigade in the absence of Superintendent Baker, said—I was in charge at Marshall's fire. I was alarmed by a young man named Staer, who seemed rather excited. He was out of breath. He helped me to get out the reel. This was at forty-five minutes after 2 o'clock. He went with me to the fire, when we

got the reel out about two minutes after. The fire could be seen coming from all the doors in Marshall's place facing Stephens-lane. When I arrived at first the flames were only coming out of the bottom door. We could see the fire through the windows, spreading both north and south. I took four firemen with me. There was no obstruction to our work from the plug we used in Stephens-place, but up the lane the plug was covered over with about four inches of broken metal, and we were delayed in finding it some four or five minutes. The firemen present, including myself, mustered twelve. Our hose burst and caused a delay on Donaldson's roof for about five or ten minutes. It also burst several other times during the fire. The hose is not in very good condition. I do not consider the whole gear in good working order. There was a very good pressure of water, but I was afraid to turn it on full, knowing as I did that the hose might burst. Had we had double the number of men and good gear we might have saved more. We could have saved Donaldson's from catching fire. I do not know who is responsible for the gear being out of order. We might have saved more of Marshall's property if we had more ladders, our longest being only sixteen feet. Mr. Baker has the management of the Brigade, but he is ill and unable to attend the fire. I have no idea of the origin of the fire. I believe it started on the first floor over the cellar, as the body of the fire was there. There was some fire in the cellar at the time we arrived, as though it had caught from the upper floor. I burst open Mr. Vosz's store to get some ladders to mount on the Globe roof.

To the Jury—All the the inmates had not escaped when I got there. There was one still inside, and was being brought down at the time. All the plugs available with one hose were used, and I sent for the Government House and Government Printing office reel. I only got two volunteers to assist us with Mr. Fry for the first two hours, and then the police became of great assistance. Volunteers are allowed 2s. 6d. an hour for the first hour. We had a practice about five weeks ago, and under drill we have put on full pressure of water. The hose has sometimes burst at trial. I think there was on extra pressure of water at the time of the fire. At our station we have five lengths of hose and two of them are bad.

To Mr. Mann—The fire had a good hold on the building when I got there, and I expect it had been burning for twenty minutes. I know Staer by giving me alarms of fires before. He gave me information of Mr. Hammer's fire on June 3,1881, at a quarter to 2 o'clock. He, with another, also gave me information of Wilcox's fire at about 3 o'clock in the morning. I think he lives on North-terrace, or up a lane on Pulteney-street. Wilcox's fire occurred in February 21,1882. I have seen Staer at Stokes' fire in Rundle-street at about 5 o'clock on the morning of February 26 of this year. He was there when it was about all over. I was told he was at Allen's fire on February 23 of this year. I do not remember seeing him at Cox's fire. That was at half-past 8 o'clock in the evening. The fire at the Catholic Book Depot took place at about 3 o'clock in the morning. I do not know whether Staer was there. At Wilcox's fire he was very much excited, but he was quiet at Marshall's, though he was very much out of breath when he aroused me. There is a reward of 10s. 6d. for the person who gives the first alarm of a fire, which he got in the case of Hammer's, Wilcox's, and Marshall's fires. I paid him £1 19s. 6d. as well for working at Marshall's. A person can get from the scene of the fire either by way of North-terrace or Rundle-street to my house in about two minutes. Staer has always been anxious to get the reel out and help us.

To Mr. Symon —I should think it was half an hour after I arrived at the fire before Donaldson's roof caught. I was the first man on the roof. I should say the flames were at this time fifty or sixty feet above Marshall's roof. The wind was from the south-west, and the

flames were curling towards the Institute. I and a policeman got on Donaldson's roof and fixed a hose to the Clubhouse plug to play on the back of Marshall's. I then saw Donaldson's skylight catch fire, and told the policemen to play on it. The hose then burst, and it was five or ten minutes before it was repaired. I sent for Government House hose, and put it work in the National Bank lane to play on Donaldson's. If our hose had not burst we might have saved a lot of Donaldson's. The skylight was only twenty feet away from Marshall's wall. I think the fire was pretty well got under before I saw one of the partners and his assistants at work at Donaldson's. This was about 4 o'clock.

William Staer, who was cautioned by the Coroner against answering anything which he might consider would criminate him, said to Mr. Mann—I am a labourer, living with my parents on North-terrace, ten doors from Pulteney-street. I was working at the Exhibition up to 11 o'clock p.m. on Saturday week, and I was not taken on again on Monday because I was not there till noon. I was working for the proprietors of the Old English Fair, and after knocking off I went to the Tavistock Hotel with Roach and two other young fellows. We had a drink there, and stopped about five minutes. This was before 11, and the hotel was not closed. We then went down to the York Hotel, which was just closing. We had one drink there, and went down to Klauer's, in Hindley-street, meeting one or two others at the hotel. We had two drinks there. My friends went into the Theatre Royal about 12 o'clock, and I remained outside. We afterwards went to Moss's Corner, and stood talking there for half an hour. We then went down as far as the Hamburg Hotel, and remained under the verandah for some time. Two of the party went down Rundle-street, and Roach and I went along Freeman-street into Grenfell-street, walking towards King William-street. We went to the corner of the Eagle Chambers, stayed there a little time, and proceeded along Pirie-street as far as a little street close to the German-Club. There I left Roach and went down Pulteney-street as far as the Scotch Church, and met a policeman at the corner named Wardell. He asked me if I would oblige him with a match, and I walked steadily with him up the terrace as far as Dr. Gosse's. He said to me, "I have to see some one at the corner. I will catch you up again." I went as far as Dr. Campbell's, and some one came and rang his bell, and then went to the next doctor's. Stephens-place is between the two places, and I crossed over it. I waited for the Policeman for a little while, and walked some way down North-terrace, when I heard a person cry out "Fire" behind me, and I do not think this could have been more than ten minutes after the police-man left me. I looked round and saw smoke rising from over Marshall's furniture warehouse, and a reflection on Birks's wall. I ran round at once by way of North-terrace to warn Mr. Harrison. I intended to go down to see the watchman at the Exhibition when I met the policeman. I gave the alarm only once before to Harrison. It was at Hammer's. A person named Opie roused me at the time of Wilcox's fire. I did not go to Allen's fire, nor Cox's, nor Scott's. I went to see Stoke's fire when it was all over. I had nothing to drink after I left Klauer's. I don't think I was intoxicated. I told the policeman I had been asleep that afternoon and did not want to go to bed. As a matter of fact I was not asleep. I think I told the policeman I had been drinking. I was not standing outside Marshall's at 1 o'clock on Sunday morning with friends. I never went to the King of Hanover. I have been working at the Exhibition from Thursday till Saturday. I have not been in regular work since with my brother six months ago. I have been out to our farm at Lobethal, and came back to town about a month ago. All I earned for a month was 8s., and I got some money from my mother. I have often been out late. I left Roach somewhere in Pirie-street near the brewery, not at Fitch's Corner opposite the York Hotel.

To the Jury—I got 5s. for assisting at Wilcox's fire, and was paid the reward for giving the alarm at Hammer's fire.

To Mr. Grundy—I was one of the volunteers at the fire. I received £1 18s. 6d., including 10s. 6d. re-ward, for my services at Marshall's.

To Mr. Yuill—I passed the right-of-way at the back of Hammer's on my way home, and was un-dressing at the time when I observed the fire there. Joseph Roach, barman, lately at the Exhibition Grounds, said—I was employed there on Saturday week. I live in Carrington-street. I left the Exhibition about 11 o'clock at night. I know William Staer. I went with him to the Tavistock and Cohen's Hotel. Had drinks there. We went to the York, but I cannot tell if we had a drink there, and we afterwards went to Klauer's and had, I think, four drinks there. We did not go to the Theatre Royal, but stood at the corner of Moss's till about half-past 12 o'clock, and then went by Gawler-place home. Staer left me in Pirie-street near the Hindmarsh Hotel, nearly opposite to the brewery. I heard the clock strike 2 just about five minutes after I left him. I did not see which way he went. We had no drinks after we left Klauer's. Staer was not drunk. I do not know how much he drank. I had seven drinks in about an hour. I was not standing with a man named Melaney and Staer outside Marshall's at 1 a.m., nor did I go with Staer to the King of Hanover.

Sydney Wardell, Police-Constable, Adelaide, said —I was on duty on the morning of the 12th inst. at about twenty minutes past 2 o'clock. I met Staer at the corner of Pulteney-street and North-terrace at that time, and he seemed to have been running, and to be slightly under the influence of drink. He said "Good morning," and I asked him why he was out so late, He said he had been sleeping the whole of the afternoon up to 8 p.m., and that he did not feel inclined to go to bed, and had been drinking with some friends. He said he was working at the Exhibition, and asked if he could walk down the terrace with me. I told him he could, and we walked down as far as Stephens-place, where I left him about twenty minutes to 3 o'clock. I went down to the guard-house at Government House gates, and then went up to the Police Station as I was going off duty at 3 o'clock. I saw no signs of fire nor any people in the street as I passed Stephens-place. I first heard of the fire at the police station. Staer gave me a lucifer match.

Alexander Wallace, Police-Constable, Adelaide, said—I saw Staer, Melaney, and another man standing in front of the Globe about 1 a.m. on the 12th inst., and afterwards saw them again, apparently going down into the yard of the King of Hanover. I have known Staer from a child. He does not bear a good character. I have not known him to do any work for two years. I have seen him about at all hours, but have not known him to be at any other fires beyond Marshall's. I did not know Roach before to-day and should not think he was the third man I saw outside the Globe.

John Walter Dyer, watchman, said—I remember Saturday night before the fire. I passed by Marshall's about 11 o'clock and everything seemed right up to ten minutes past 2 on Sunday morning, when I examined all the back premises. I saw no signs of fire about the place. It was about a quarter to 3 o'clock when I heard the alarm of fire. I was in Grenfell-street at the time. The fire when I saw it first seemed to be all in that part of the premises at the end of the lane off Stephens-street. I saw no one about. I took a cab at once and went to North Adelaide to tell Mr. Davis, the jeweller, that there was a fire next door to his shop, but found him away from home. I then went to alarm Donaldson's head warehouseman, and found him already aroused. I often have to rout loafers out of the lane.

Frederick William Allnutt, draper's assistant, living on the premises of James Marshall & Co., said —My duty is to take charge of the keys and lock-up the premises on alternate weeks with Mr. Evans. I had charge of the keys when the fire broke out. I went to bed at a quarter-past 11 o'clock on the Saturday night. There was no one else up at the time. At half-past 10 I went round the shop premises and locked them up. The last gas-meter was turned off by me at 10.35 p.m. in the cellar below the cutter's room. This meter put out the gas in the cellar, cutter's room, and top of No. 26. The gas supplied to the living apartments was turned off at 11.15 p.m. There was no smell of fire at this time. I did not go round the bedrooms. It is not my duty. I ask the inmates if they are all in, and then lock the remaining doors required to be locked. I saw no lights about the premises when I went to bed I was disturbed by the screams of Ellen McDougall at 3 a.m. on Sunday. She was crying out "The place is on fire, Mr. Evans." We were all aroused at once, and I went to the top door on the top story, and saw the flames coming from the two doors below. The girls were all up and downstairs before me. The house keeper fell down the first flight of stairs, and had to be carried the rest of the way. The men escaped the best way they could, and six of us got down by means of a rope from a back window. We had no time to dress; but all got down safely. I never heard of any one using a candle in the house after it was locked up during the two years and a half I have been there. Several candles were found in Mrs. Reid's room. Any one of the inmates can get out of the house during the night, but cannot return without a key I never heard of this happening. To my knowledge there is only one set of Keys. I had all the keys in my possession when the fire broke out. I believe it broke out in the cutter's room, because I observed most of the flames at first came from there. There was no fire used in the room. The cutter smokes a good deal, but I have never seen him do so in the house. He left at 10 o'clock on the night before the fire. He is not an intemperate man. I cannot suggest any cause of the fire. None of the men have been discharged lately for bad conduct, and I know of no one bearing enmity against the firm. By arrangement amongst them-selves the inmates of the house can get in and out by the door or the lift : but I never know it to happen. All the matches are kept in the office. The lantern I use in locking-up is a bullseye, trimmed with colza oil, and on Saturday night I left it in our sitting room upstairs. Such a thing has happened as one inmate letting in another at night.

To the Jury—The only opening from the lane into the cutting-room was the space under the bottom door, where no one could get his hand in. Matches might he put underneath, but there was nothing in flammable within reach. The staircase leading from the lane to the sleeping apartment's is encased in wood.

To Mr. Mann—The meter on the staircase supplies the gas-stove in the kitchen. There was a gas jet some distance from the stove. On the north wall an inlet pipe had to be plugged after the fire. The key of the cutting-room was a common one, and could be duplicated.

To the Coroner—All inflammable liquids were kept in the furniture warehouse. Any inmate must necessarily come outside to use the privies, which are just beside the door of the cutter's room. They might light themselves down stairs by matches with out my knowing it.

Richard George Thompson, cutter at Marshall and Co.'s said — I was at work at my room on the Saturday night before the fire, and I left between half-past 9 and 10 o'clock. I had been doing my ordinary work, until 9 o'clock. I never smoked on the premises. I have been with the firm since July 26, 1881. I have a four-burner light over my counter. It is rather high, and I have never known anything hung upon it. There are about 100 paper patterns hanging up

in the room about three yards away from the counter. Customers came into the room. On leaving I went to the Globe Hotel, and thence home to the Orient Hotel. The gas is generally lit by a boy with a wax taper. On Saturday I lit the gas over my counter with a safety match at about half-past 4 o'clock.

To Mr. Mann—I suppose a man might be able to put a newspaper under the door, the greatest space beneath it being about a quarter of an inch in the middle, where the step is worn.

The enquiry was then adjourned at 5.30 p.m. till 10 a.m. next morning..

The City Coroner (Mr. T. Ward, J.P.) continued the inquest on the late fire at Messrs. James Marshall & Co.'s premises at Parr's old Exchange-room, King William-street, on Tuesday, at 10 a.m.

James Windmill Porter, one of the firm of Marshall & Co., said—We had a fire on our premises on the 12th of this month. I left them at about half past 10 on the Saturday night, at which time everything appeared as safe as usual. I did not go through the cutter's room just before leaving, but everything looked right on that side. I live at Mackinnon-parade, North Adelaide, and was aroused by one of our drivers on Sunday morning at half-past 3. I could see the fire from my house and sent the driver on to Mr. Fry's. I arrived at the fire a little before 4 o'clock, and saw all the back premises on fire where the assistants slept, and also the linoleum room, where the fire was burning fiercest, on account of the nature of the floorcloths. I was the first of the firm at the fire. I have no idea how it occurred, except that I have entertained suspicious about the Reids, whom we prosecuted for taking goods from our place.

The Coroner—I have received a report from the police stating that they are satisfied that Reid went to bed at an early hour on Saturday, and was not out of bed so as to be at the fire on Sunday morning. The mother and daughter were in gaol at the time.

Witness—From what I have been told I believe the fire broke out in the cutter's room. I have known some of the inmates of our premises to come in ten minutes or a quarter of an hour after the time when the doors are supposed to be locked. I don't know of any of them ever coming home suffering from drink. I believe there were five females in the house at the time of the fire—a housekeeper and four servants. They are all respectable persons, so far as I know. The housekeeper is suffering from an accident she met with while attempting to escape from the burning premises. The taperlight we used in lighting the gas is not screened. Our insurances will barely cover our loss. I cannot tell whether they will when the salvage is sold. I fancy I have heard of candles being used by the young men, though it is against the strict rule. Nothing inflammable in the way of spirits was kept in the cutter's room. We have never taken stock, and all the profits have gone into stock.

To the Jury—The gas was all lit on Saturday night by about half-past 5 o'clock. We had about 175 hands in our employment, and I do not think any department would be left unvisited during the evening. If there were any fire smouldering it ought to have been seen by the lockers up. The housekeeper, Mrs. Sharland, was not privileged to use candles. The rope by which some of the in-mates escaped was always kept in case of accident. The inmates had a dread of fire on the premises, lest by its breaking out below, where they slept, their escape would be cut off.

To Mr. Symon—There was no duplicate key to the cutter's room. The door might be opened from the inside by withdrawing the bolts.

To Mr. Grundy—The door leading on to the lane facing Stephens-place communicated with the living apartments, and not with the cutter's room. I believe the inmates could get out by arrangement with one another, with waking up whoever had the keys. There was a Chubb's lock on the out-side door, which could be opened from the inside, but not from the inside without the key; but I think there was an ordinary carpenter's lock on the door, and if it were locked and the key removed, I do not see how the inmates could get out without awaking Mr. Allnutt, who had the keys. If a person set fire to the cutter's room from the inside he would have to break through bolted doors to get out direct into the lane, or on leaving the room he would find himself in the middle of the shops.

To Mr. Symon—To escape from the cutter's room through the shops a person would have to break through one or two locked doors according to the route he took, and then pass out through a window in No. 28 overlooking a small right-of-way. Mr. Allnutt stated that he locked this window, but it was found unlocked by myself and the police when we went to get the safes. The window was 12 feet above the ground.

To the Jury—I believe any person inside the cutter's room could open the doors leading directly into the lane. It was a double door with a bolt on one side and a lock on the other.

To Mr. Yuill—On the left-hand side of the door there was a stock of shirts, and on the other hosiery.

Ellen McDougall, domestic servant at Marshall and Co's., said—I went to bed shortly after 11 o'clock on the night before the fire. I was in bed by half-past 11, and undressed in the dark, the gas being out. I did not keep a candle in my room, but there might have been a box of safety matches in my room. I and Mary Hall had been sleeping in the dining-room for several nights on account of our room being so very warm. We slept on Saturday night in the dining-room. I never saw Mary Hall light a candle in the place, and never did so myself. I woke up by a crackling noise after 2 o'clock, and going to the window I saw the reflection of the fire.

I aroused the household at once by screaming out "fire." I went and got a dress immediately, and all the other girls put something on, and we went downstairs. Just before I went down I saw the flames rising up front the cutter's room towards the kitchen and dining room. Soon after we got past the middle stairs the flames came through the glass door which is just a little above the cutter's room. We all got down safe. The housekeeper was the last down, and had to be carried out. The clock struck 3 just after we got out into the street. There was no light in any of the girls' rooms. I have no idea of the origin of the fire. I do not know if any of the people in the house had any ill-feeling towards the firm. I never heard Mrs. Reid grumbling.

To the Jury—None of us girls were fully dressed at the time of the fire. There was a young man went down before us. I heard it was Rebeck, and that he opened the door. I am sure the crackling I heard was not at one end of the dining-room, be-cause I was at one end and the door was at the other. The crackling noise came from the outside—the windows being open. Anybody would have to pass through the sitting-room and kitchen to get downstairs. I saw no one pass before I gave the alarm.

To the Coroner—So far as I know Mrs. Sharland, the housekeeper, had gone to bed when I did. I did not see a light in her room.

To Mr. Symon—There were two doors on the middle staircase we used to go upstairs, one leading to the milliners' department and one facing a lift outside towards the carpet-room. It was this last one I saw the flames coming out of after I passed down the stairs. These flames would come from the cutter's door.

To Mr. Grundy—All the inmates were asleep when I woke up. I never heard any one going down stairs before I gave the alarm. I saw Rebeck out in the street. I think he had only a pair of grey trousers and shirt on. He had no boots or socks on. I never heard of any one going out after the place had been locked.

Mary Hall, housemaid at Marshall & Co.'s, said—I went to bed with the last witness on the Saturday night before the fire at about half-past 11. We did not use a candle, but went to bed with out a light. Ellen McDougall awoke me and said the place was on fire. The fire seemed to come from the cutter's room, and on passing downstairs I felt the walls very hot. We girls had not time to dress before we escaped. As I passed the glass door looking over the cutter's room I saw flames coming up outside. I have no idea how the fire occurred, and never heard any of the other inmates' opinion on the matter. Some times the young men have come home late, but I do not recollect them not having called up Mr. Allnutt to get in on these occasions. They have come home a little after twelve o'clock sometimes. I never knew any of them to use a candle.

To the Jury — The male and female in-mates' apartments were in different buildings. When the young men were out late they used to stand in the lane, and call out to Mr. Allnutt to let them in. I heard no one call out on the night before the fire. When I got out I only saw two strange young men standing in the lane, who asked if, everybody had come down. We said all except the housekeeper. This was about half-past 2 o'clock. The strangers I saw were not firemen. I could not say if they were fully dressed. They were dressed in black, but I would not know them again.

To Mr. Grundy—I went down before Ellen McDougall, and heard no one go down before me. There was a great noise at the time. The glass door on the staircase looking over the cutter's door was not open. As soon as I got downstairs I looked at the fire and saw it was in the cutter's room. I could not say that his door was on fire.

To Mr. Yuill—There were no flames coming out of the doorway. The fire was inside.

To Mr. Fleming—I saw it through the fan-light over the door.

To Mr. Grundy—The fire was then confined to the cutter's room.

Jane Brown, cook at Marshall & Co.'s, said—I slept on their premises on the night before the fire. I retired to my room about half-past 11, but did not go to bed until nearly 12 o'clock. I turned off the gas in the kitchen at about ten minutes past 11 o'clock. I went to bed in the dark. I have been in my situation four months, and never saw a lighted candle used in the house except once by Mrs. Reid. I was first awoke by Ellen McDougall, who said that the place was on fire. I arose immediately, and she awoke the others in the house. She went across the dining-room to wake Mr. Evans, and came back to my bedroom. Mrs. Sharland came into the room, and was going to jump out of the window, but I pulled her back, and begged her to be collected. Mary Hall said she would try to get through, and passed through

the dining-room, and we followed Mrs. Sharland fell in the dining-room over a chair, it being rather dark. I took her hand and led her to the top of the stairs, it still being dark. I went down three steps with her, when I felt the smoke overpowering me, and I let go her hand, and she fell to the bottom of the flight. We stepped over her, and got down the best way we could. I did not notice the flames until I got outside. I heard glass breaking previously, and on getting out side I turned round and saw the flames coming out of the cutter's door. The flames were towering up the outside of the wall. Going up the lane we met a young man and told him that Mrs. Sharland was on the premises, and then a policeman came up. They went upstairs directly and brought her down and laid her on the case. She asked me to get her a bed, and I took her into the Globe Hotel. She is now at her lodgings in Victoria-square. I have not the slightest idea how the fire occurred. When I went to sleep my door and window were open on account of the night being close, but I never smelt any odour of burning materials. My idea is that the cutter's room was the first place the fire started in. I was never in the room myself, and seldom went beyond the kitchen. I do not know if Mrs. Sharland went to bed by candlelight, as I was never in her room. I know nothing about the other inmates using candles at night. On two occasions I remember young men coming home late and calling to be let in. I do not know who the young man was who assisted in getting Mrs. Sharland downstairs.

Henry Rebeck, an assistant in Marshall & Co.'s furniture department, said—I sleep on the premises, at the northern end next to last room. I went to bed on the night before the fire at about a quarter to 11. I was one of the first to go to bed. The gas was not turned out then. I noticed no smell of fire before I went to bed. I do not remember who was last to go. Have been sleeping there about six months, and I never saw a candle lit in the men's rooms. I believe most of the men smoke, and on one or two occasions I know some of the young fellows have been out late and others would go down and let them in. They might have been half an hour late. We could all go out from the inside if we liked, and I suppose it would be possible to jam the door to keep it open. I was awake on Sunday morning by a young man named Ising crying out "Fire" in the next room. I got up at once and put on my boots and trousers, and found all the young men around the northern window where the rope was. I said, "Let's try the stairs," and ran down and opened the door at the bottom leading into the lane. I passed through a good deal of smoke. I ran out of the lane with the intention of going to the Police Station, and met a policeman at the Globe corner. He said, as far as I can remember, "it's all right; the alarm is given." On coming towards the stairs I noticed tongues of flame coming through the sitting-room, which is two stories over the cutter's room, and when I got out-side most of the fire seemed to be coming out over the cutter's door. The fire was burning fiercely there, but I noticed none elsewhere. After meeting the constable I went back and woke up Williams, who sleeps in the furniture warehouse, in order to get the hose out. I then went up the stairs again as far as the passage leading to the sitting-room, in which I saw the reflection of the fire. I sang out, "Is any one here?" and getting no answer I descended. When I came down the stairs I found the housekeeper just being dragged out. We then played the water from the furniture warehouse hose on the fire over the cutter's door. It seemed to me about twenty minutes before the firemen came, whom I assisted as far as possible. The principal plug opposite to the cutter's door took a long time to find, as it was covered with metal. It was from twenty minutes to half an hour before we could use the plug after beginning to look for it. The brigade had no crowbar, and I had to get one from the furniture warehouse. We assistants have talked about the fire amongst ourselves, and

suggestions have been made that perhaps its origin was a spark falling from the gas or somebody lighting his pipe in the cutter's room.

To Mr. Yuill—I do not think the cutter's door was on fire when I first came down. The flames were coming out above through the fanlight.

Richard George Thomson, cutter at Marshall and Co.'s, re-examined, said—After half-past 6 o'clock on Saturday night I used no patterns, but was cutting from the cloth. I never had an iron brought down into my department except during the first few-days I was with the firm. I sent my patterns upstairs to be smoothed. I could not positively say that there was no customer smoking in my room on Saturday afternoon, but I am positive there was no one in the evening. I always check any one smoking in my department. I had neither pipe, cigar, cigarette, nor matches in my possession on Saturday, having left home in a hurry and forgotten them. If any one had dropped fire about the room and it remained smouldering Mr. Allnutt should have noticed it when going his rounds. A piece of cotton curtain attached to some fittings on the right-hand side of the door was the only material touching that part of the floor of the room not yet described. Had this been smouldering I must have seen it before I left, as my coat was hanging just above it.

Robert Reid, storeman, out of work, said—I am an invalid, living in Liverpool-street, Adelaide. On the night before the fire at Marshall & Co.'s I went to bed at about half-past 7 o'clock. I was in town on the Monday morning after the fire to get my daughter released. I was in town before ; that was when I called on Mr. Taylor about my wife's clothing and that of my daughter. He told me they had suffered enough by Mrs. Reid, and could not give them up until my wife's account with them was paid. The account was for over £5. I felt taken aback at hearing of this account, not knowing of its existence ; but I did not lose my temper or use any threats. I was in town on the Saturday before the fire to see after releasing my daughter, and left town between 1 and 2 o'clock, and did not return till Monday. I was living in North Adelaide then.

Bethia Reid, daughter of the last witness, corroborated her fathers evidence.

Henry Lilley, coachman to Dr. Phillips, said—I was sleeping in the surgery on Sunday morning and at about half-past 2 o'clock I heard a screaming as if some one was hurt. I got up, and heard some one call fire, and saw a reflection in the direction whence the call came. I ran round to Stephens-place, and found that Marshall's was on fire. I saw fire coming out from above and under the door facing Stephens-place. The door was not then burnt. I did not notice fire anywhere else. A con-stantle and Rebeck were there at the time, and I went upstairs with the constable, and helped to bring Mrs. Sharland down from the first landing. She seemed unconscious, and we laid her on a case in the lane.

William Taylor, of the firm of Marshall & Co., re-examined by Mr. Symon, said—I do not know that the signature to the proposal for our insurance in the Transatlantic Company is that of our agent, Mr. Mackie. Never gave him a list of our other insurances. Our accountant has a list, and may have given one to him, but Mr. Mackie has a list of his own, as he does all this business for us. The list of insurances mentioned in the proposal does not appear to be correct. The Imperial is put down at £1,400, and I think it should be either £12,000 or £14,000. On March 1 our insurance with the Imperial Company was, I believe, £14,000, of which £8,000 fell due on that date, and as the Company would not reduce their rate we transferred the policies for that amount to other Companies. On March 1, or it might have

been next day, we insured in the City Mutual Company for £1,500, but I do not think we increased our insurances after. We insured in the Phœnix Company in December last for £11,500. In my evidence yesterday I stated our insurances were increased £4,000 or £5,000 during the last two months, I now wish to correct that, and state that the increase was only £1.500.

George Rollan, driver for Marshall & Co., said— I sleep in the furniture warehouse. I was in Rundle-street the night before the fire, in front of the shops till 11 o'clock, when I went to bed. I did not notice any smell of burning. The cutter's room from the door by which I enter the warehouse is distant about twenty or thirty yards. I was awake at a quarter to 3 on Sunday morning by the screams of a girl, and getting up I saw Marshall's on fire, with the flames apparently coming out of the cutters room, but nowhere else. There were no people about except our own hands, who had come downstairs. They were very scantily dressed. Flames were coming out from the cutter's door.

The inquest was then adjourned at 4.50 p.m. to 10 a.m. next day.

The City Coroner (Mr. T. Ward, J.P.) continued the inquest on the late fire at Messrs. James Marshall & Co.'s premises at Parr's Old Exchange room, King William-street, on Wednesday, at 10 a.m.

Alfred Wheller Evans, assistant to Marshall and Co., said—I slept on the premises of the firm on the night before the fire in the same room as Mr. Allnut, who came upstairs at half-past 10, but did not go to bed till half-past 11 o'clock. We had some conversation when he first came up, and he told me that all was well in connection with the business premises. At a quarter past 11 he went round the living apartments and said all was right on returning. We keep the keys week and week about. There is a duplicate key of a door leading from the living apartments to the blanket-room, but not giving any access to the cutter's room. Nothing disturbed me after I went to sleep till a boy named Guild ran down the passage outside the bedrooms calling out "Mr. Evans, the place is on fire." This was about a quarter past 3 o'clock. I immediately got up and found the place full of smoke. One of the hands had a rope outside the back window, by which I descended fourteen feet, and escaped. I ran round to the lane off Stephens-place and saw the door of the cutter's room all in a blaze. I am satisfied that it was there the fire broke out. I had only come back from a fortnight's visit to Victoria on the Saturday night, and had gone straight to the sitting-room, and thence to bed, so that I have no idea of how the fire occurred. I know the cutter was a heavy smoker, but I also know he was most particular about not smoking on the premises. Customers going to the cutter's room if seen smoking are checked. If any fire had fallen on any goods in the room and smouldered there after the gas had been lit, Mr. Allnut must have noticed the smell when going his rounds. Cotton goods would not smell so strongly as woollen goods. A boy went round with Mr. Allnut. From thirty to forty customers would go into the cutter's room on a Saturday. On one occasion I remember an assistant, named Norvey, coming home after hours, at a quarter to 12 o'clock. The stairs leading to the living apartments were new, with a brick wall on one side, and a wooden partition on the other. Any person dropping fire going upstairs could not drop it into any of the rooms.

To the Jury—There were a good many rats in the tailor's room on the top storey. Matches required for the purpose of lighting the gas would be got from the kitchen or the counting-room. I am a smoker, and I carry safety matches sometimes. If I wanted to light the gas and had safety matches in my pocket I would perhaps take one out to light a taper. Everybody

was not allowed to light the gas. The cutter might be, as he was a senior hand. I have noticed that when customers have been asked to desist from smoking that they would put their lighted pipes in their pockets and carry cigars in their hands. I have never seen any one put a lighted cigar on the cutter's counter, but it is a thing that might happen in any shop.

To Mr. Bray—I never saw anything catch fire on the premises before this fire. I could not reach the gas in the cutter's room from the floor. I was too exhausted by the smoke to assist the fire brigade.

To Mr. Yuill—None of the young men slept in separate rooms, and I do not think any of them could have got up and left the premises without being observed.

To the Coroner—Twelve male assistants were sleeping on the premises at the time of the fire, and not one of them is missing nor one of the women either.

Alexander Guild, shopboy at Marshall & Co.'s, said—When it is my late week I have to go round with Mr. Allnutt and Mr. Evans, when they are locking up. On the night before the fire I went round with Mr. Allnutt. I went round first to shut off the gas jets which were not needed, and shut all the windows and skylights. I started in the bottom flat of No. 26 at about a quarter to 10 o'clock. I went through the cutter's room, and left his jets burning. I left a jet burning in a pipe belonging to each meter to clear the pipes out when the gas was turned off. I smoke a cigarette occasionally, but did not do so while turning out the lights. I afterwards went round with Mr. Allnutt about a quarter-past 10, but smelt no fire about. I stood on a chair in the cutters room while Mr. Allnutt turned off the gas meter in the cellar, and when the jet still burning in the room went out, I turned the tap off. After turning out all the gases we went to bed.

To the Jury—I could not say now whether I fastened the window in the blanket-room. Mr. Allnutt fastened none in going round.

Samuel James Thomas, drapers' assistant, said— I slept on Marshall's premises on the night before the fire, going to bed about a quarter-past 11 o'clock. I noticed no smell of fire about the place then. The gas was burning at the time. The young fellows in the house do not use candles in cases of emergency. During the eighteen months I have been there I have never known any one smoke or use a match upstairs. I was awake earlier on the morning of the fire than usual, because I was going for a row, and after sitting on my bed for some time I went to sleep again, and was in about ten minutes aroused by cries of "Fire." When I first got up I looked up to the skylight to ascertain, if possible, what the time was, as I was fidgetty about oversleeping myself, but I saw no indications of fire then. I would have seen a fire if it were burning high enough. After the alarm I escaped safely but had not time to dress. I rushed into the sitting-room at first and looked out through the glass doors, and saw the flames rushing up from the cutter's room.

A Juror—Mr. Coroner, it has been painfully manifest to any one watching these proceedings that the witnesses have been unwilling to answer questions. Whether in the case of Messrs. Marshall's assistants this was done not to commit themselves with their employers I do not know, but I think that the Coroner ought to exact more direct answers from them. I may state on behalf of several Jurors that they agree with me.

The Coroner—I cannot agree with your remarks, Mr. Juror, because I do not think the whole of the witnesses have shown themselves unwilling to answer questions, and as a rule I think

they have behaved exceedingly well. The present witness is the most troublesome one we have had, but we cannot expect all to be possessed of clear heads. His want of clearness is his misfortune, and I think the Juror's remarks are uncalled for. The Foreman—May I consult with each Juror and see how many agree with what has been said about the witnesses, because this is the first I have heard of it. The Coroner—Do so at once and save time.

The Foreman (after consultation with the Jury) said—On the subject of having matches in their possession many of the Jury think there is some amount of reticence on the part of witnesses. The Coroner—I called attention to that before, and especially in the case of the last witness. The Juror—I forgot to mention the subject of matches when I spoke first. The Coroner—I will endeavour to extract all the evidence I can where I see any reticence on the part of witnesses.

John Magennis, manager of Marshall & Co.'s woollen and tailoring department, said—In the absence of the cutter I ushered customers into his room to take orders or measure them for clothes. I did so on the Saturday evening before the fire. I remember showing in two. Whenever I saw any one smoking before coming into the woollen department I always saw that they desisted from smoking. The customers I introduced into the cutter's room on Saturday night were not smoking.

To the Jury—If a man were smoking in the cutter's room he would be noticed. To the Coroner—I do not know whether any matches were kept on the premises.

Christopher Greenslade, groom at Marshall and Co.'s, said—I was aroused about 3 o'clock on Sunday morning by an alarm of fire, and I ran to the stairs, but found the fire so strong there that I could not face it, and returned to the back window. The fire seemed to be coming up from the cutter's room. I escaped by a rope from the window. I went to bed about 11 o'clock on Saturday. I do not smoke, and never saw any one smoking upstairs. I smoke a cigar occasionally, but never in the house. I never carry lucifer matches with me. There was an arrangement among the young men when they wanted to go out after hours for others to let them in. They have gone out and come in again during the two months I have been there, but I cannot remember exactly when. I went out by myself soon after I took my situation. I went to bed before I went out I arranged with Peter Dwyer to let me in, as I wanted to go out for the purposes of accommodation. I never went for a walk, nor got out any other night by arrangement. I do not know there was any arrangement for the young men to go out for their pleasure.

To the Foreman—I have never been cautioned not to speak about any such arrangement. When I said there was an arrangement I made a mistake. I thought the Coroner was referring to the privy.

As the hour for luncheon had arrived it was suggested that the witness should be retained in the room during the adjournment and have his luncheon brought to him, so that he could not communicate with Dwyer before the latter was examined.

The Coroner proposed that Dwyer should be examined as to Greenslade's evidence only before the adjournment, remarking that the latter had exhibited a great deal of cunning or ignorance.

Peter Dwyer, driver for Marshall & Co., then called, said—I lived on the burnt premises. I know of no arrangement for the young men to go out after hours and be let in again. They

could go out by themselves all right, but could not get in again unless they put a stone against the door to prevent it closing, or the door was opened from within. I do not remember if Greenslade ever consulted me about his getting out as stated in his evidence. To the best of belief he did not. Examination continued after luncheon—I asked a few of the hands that have been examined as to what questions I would be asked. They told me I would be asked if I knew how the fire started. They did not tell me I should be cautious in my answers, so as not to injure the firm, or so as not to get myself discharged. I was speaking with Mr. Evans, but he did not suggest how I should answer. I am going to remain with the firm.

The Coroner—Do you know that those who are going to remain with the firm are to have any special privileges allowed them? Witness—No. The Coroner—Do you know anything about a picnic coming off soon?

Witness—No. I slept in the same room as Ising, and was awakened by Ellen McDougall calling out fire. I raised the bedroom window at once, and on looking out saw the flames coming out of the door-way to the cutter's room. I never tried to go down by the stairs, as I did not think it was safe, and I got down by the rope out of the back window. When I got round into the lane the flames were rising several yards above the cutter's door. I never saw Thomson, the cutter, smoking on the premises, and do not smoke myself.

Harry E. Ising, assistant to Marshall & Co., said —I slept in the same room as Peter Dwyer. I went to bed at a quarter to 10 the night before the fire, and went to sleep very soon afterwards. I suppose it was about 3 o'clock when I heard the cry of "Fire." I arose at once and looked out of the window, and thought the flames I saw were coming from the cutter's room. On rushing down the stairs I found that they were. I know the cutter smokes, but I have never seen him doing so on the premises. No one cautioned me how I should give my evidence. I never saw anyone smoking upstairs.

Henry Sweet, porter at Marshall & Co.'s, said—I went to bed on the premises at ten minutes past 11 on the night before the fire, and did not get up until I was aroused by young Guild drying out "Fire." I escaped by the rope, as the staircase was not safe to enter, and on getting into the lane I saw the fire raging in the cutter's room. I was going to assist at the fire, but the constables prevented us. I do not smoke. I never heard of any of the inmates coming home late "topheavy." The cutter is a man who takes a little drink. I do not mean I know he takes a little too much.

The Coroner—Have you seen customers smoking going into the cutter's room? Witness—Sometimes; but they would be told to desist.

The Coroner—They say birds of a feather flock together—that is to say, men who are addicted to smoking will seek the society of others who do. Did you see any one smoking going into the cutter's room on Saturday? Witness—No. So far as I know I am going to stay with the firm. If any one gave information of a breach of the rules the offender would probably be discharged. The Coroner—That would make the witnesses disinclined to give information, would it not? Witness—Yes. I suppose so. A Juror—If the assistants had matches you would not tell us. Witness—We were not prohibited from carrying matches, only from using them on the premises. If we wished to do so we would go to the office for a safety match. The Coroner—If you were a long way from the office I question whether you would go to the office.

Alexander Mackie, assistant to Marshall & Co., said—I slept on the firm's premises. I went to bed at half-past 10 on the night before the fire. I slept in the same room with Guild, who aroused me by calling out fire. I looked out of the sitting-room glassdoor, which was right above the cutter's door, and saw the flames coming out of the latter. I could not see the door itself. I escaped by the staircase into the lane, and then saw the flames catch hold of the second story door above the cutter's door. I do not smoke, and I never saw others smoke upstairs. On a few occasions some of the young men have been out after hours, till 12 o'clock at the latest. They got in by calling out to Mr. Allnutt. I have never heard of them getting in without arousing him. I have no idea of the origin of the fire, but I think it must have begun in the cutter's room.

Walter Williams, porter at Marshall & Co.'s, said—I sleep in the furniture warehouse, and went to bed at a quarter to 12 on the night before the fire. I saw no strangers about before I went, and all the lights appeared to be out. There was no sign or smell of fire about. I was aroused by the screams of Ellen McDougall, who was singing out, "Mr. Evans, the place is on fire." I first saw the fire burning in the cutter's room, and when I got outside both that room and the flat above it were on fire. I have seen the cutter often.

The Coroner—Did you ever see him a little "on?" Witness—No. I never saw him smoking about the premises. I have no idea about the origin of the fire.

Samnel Hughes, constable, Adelaide, said—At about 8 o'clock on the morning of the fire I was coming up Hindley-street towards Rundle-street, and when by the Blenheim I saw the reflection of a fire from the back of Marshall's. I ran up to Stephens-place and into the lane leading to Marshall's back premises. There were several people there, including Dr. Phillips's coachman. I took a hose passed out from Marshall's furniture warehouse, and played on the cutter's doorway. The flames were confined at that time to five feet south of the door and ten feet to the north, as far as I could see. They were up as far as the ceiling. I played on it until No. 1 Reel came, and then got on the roof of a shed to the right, broke some of the glass of a window, and played through that into the room, which was then fully possessed by the flames. I got off the roof and went round to D. & J. Fowler's premises, and getting their private hose went through a skylight on to the roof. The fire was then breaking through the windows at the end of the cutter's room on to Fowler's shed, and having wetted the roof of the shed, handed the hose to Dr. Phillips's coachman, who had followed. I got on to the crown of Fowler's roof, and saw that Donaldson's skylight was on fire. One of the firemen came up on the roof and handed me a hose, with which I played on the skylight till 7 o'clock. A few minutes after the water was turned on the hose burst, and I had to wait for fifteen or twenty minutes before I could get any more water. In the meantime the burning debris from the sky light fell in to Donaldson's warehouse and set it on fire. I then broke a second skylight and played on to the fire below, If the hose had not burst we could have saved Donaldson's. We had very few volunteers, but Staer and a man named Shaw were on the roof with me.

To the Jury—There were a good many people about. The water from the joint between the nozzle and hose was playing on me all the time I was using the hose. I understand how to use hose, having been a fireman in Chichester. The hose was far from being in good order. The section that burst was off No. 2 Reel.

To Mr. Symon—I saw no one on Donaldson's premises before the skylight caught. The flames from Marshall's were high up above the wall, and the wind took them rather away from Donaldson's. I think the skylight caught from a spark or the great heat.

To the Coroner—I do not know anything about the fire-escape, but I heard it was in Rundle-street.

Thomas Alfred Westwood, draper, Rundle-street, said—I was at Marshall's fire at ten minutes past 3 o'clock. It was blazing only at the back ; there was not the slightest sign of fire in front. I stood in Stephens-place, and looking up the lane saw flames and smoke arising from the top story. I hurried round to the front and saw no fire there, but large volumes of smoke were coming from the shop No. 26, next to Donaldson's. I remained in front about a quarter of an hour and then went round to Apollo place, as I saw more reflection of the fire on Howell's corner and thought Donaldson's might be on fire. (The Jury thought no further evidence in this direction was necessary.) The hose did not play on to Donaldson's skylight until half an hour after it had caught fire, and if the water could have been thrown on it at first I think the damage to Donaldson's might have been prevented.

To Mr. Symon—I was with Others inside Donald-son's premises using the hoses on the buildings. I played on the skylight from the inside of the new building.

To Mr. Fleming—I could not see from Stephens-place if the fire was in the bottom story of Marshall's back stores.

Frederick Wright, landagent, Adelaide, said—I was roused a little after 3 o'clock on the morning of the fire by my clerk, Mr. Waterhouse, who told me Marshall's was on fire, and that Donaldson's was in great danger. I made for Apollo-place, believing that there would be the greatest danger to Donaldson's store in that direction. The fire was then blazing out from the skylight, and there was not a soul in Apollo-place. I hurried round to Rundle-street and asked for the Superintendent of the Fire Brigade, and was told he was in bed ill, and that the foreman was round in Stephens-place. I begged the firemen to send a hose round into Apollo-place, but they told me that they had no hose to spare, that there was no plug in the place, and that no hose they had would reach from King William-street. I said that I would show them a plug in Apollo-place, close to Donaldson's door. One of the firemen—not Harrison—repeated that they had no hose to spare. I returned to Apollo-place, and soon after Messrs. Westwood, Wallace, Simmons, and Sharland, jun., with Petard (who had the keys of Donaldson's), put in an appearance. The doors were opened and the private hoses at once put into use. Wet blankets were used to protect the windows on the east side of the new building, and proved very effective. About that time a reel arrived in Apollo-place, or five and twenty minutes from the time I arrived there. I was told it was from Government House. Before this a constable was playing on the skylight from the roof. The falling debris from the skylight having fired the goods in Department B we played on them with the private hose belonging to the department, but finding it was not powerful enough we got the Government House hose in, and got the fire under. It broke out again in the skylight, and it was fully 6 o'clock before it was quite extinguished. Mr. Sharland, jun., and a person named Shaw, who said he belonged at one time to the Carlton (Victoria) Brigade, rendered great assistance to the rest of us in putting out the fire in Donaldson's. If the hose-reel had been brought round to Apollo-place when I first asked for it no damage would have been done to the stock. There were unbleached calico blinds over the skylight, which, I think, first caught fire.

To Mr. Symon—After the fire was subdued there was some of the calico not burnt, but the top portion near Marshall's was. I will not swear that there was calico over the north-east corner where the woodwork was burnt. I believe all the glass of the skylight was covered with calico. I represent the Victoria Insurance Company, which have an insurance of £3,000 on Donaldson's stock in B Department.

To the Jury—Our office has always contributed to the Fire Brigade, and I am sorry the money is so ill-spent. I always understood the hose was in good order, but I heard some time ago that new hose had been ordered from home. I suppose if a fire occurred to-night the hose would be in the same condition, or a little worse than at Marshall's fire.

The Coroner intimated that he would take no more evidence that day, but would ask the gentle-men of the Jury to meet again in a week's time, in order to see what further evidence could be adduced.

A Juror complained that he had already sat four days on the inquest, and was engaged to go to Melbourne on Saturday to accept an engagement there.

The Coroner said that the Juror must have been aware that an inquest on a fire where a loss of £80,000 was involved would take some time, and if he had told Constable Hamill of his engagement when he summoned him to serve on the Jury he would have been excused.

Another Juror asked why tradesmen were always called upon to serve on Juries, which was so inconvenient to them, and stated that not long ago he had served on an inquest on Hammer's fire for three days, and now this one was going to last five days.

The Coroner replied that his Juries were generally composed of educated persons out of employment, but in such an important enquiry as the present he could not accept substitutes for tradesmen. He did not wish to prolong the enquiry further than was necessary, but in the general interests he considered it necessary to ask the Jury to meet again, and in the meantime two detectives would be employed in searching for further evidence.

The inquest was then adjourned at 6.30 p.m. till 10 a.m. next Wednesday.

Adelaide Observer (SA : 1843 - 1904), Saturday 1 April 1882, page 8

GENERAL NEWS.

The Fire in Tavistock Buildings.—The City Coroner on March 24 made enquiries respecting the fire at O'Leary's boarding-house, Tavistock-street, from which it appeared that Police-constable Neil was on duty in Rundle-street on the morning of the 24th at 12.30. Hearing a cry of fire he went to O'Leary's boarding-house, and found a fire raging at the back of premises under a staircase leading from the underground kitchen to the dining room. The fire had a strong hold of the staircase. The constable went immediately to report the circumstance to the Superintendent of Fire Brigades and also to the Police Station. The reels went to the spot, played on the fire, and extinguished it in a few minutes. Had the fire not been discovered it would in a few minutes have cut off the escape of about twenty lodgers in the house. As it was several of the men jumped out of the windows, and also a young girl, who managed to alight on a constable's head, alarming that official more than the burning of the staircase did herself. She was but little hurt. This is the third fire which the Coroner has enquired into on the same premises within about eighteen months. It seems that some

of the lodgers had been imbibing freely, and no doubt set the staircase on fire with their pipes and matches. Mr. Ward reports that the premises were in a very dirty state, and that he cautioned O'Leary. No inquest will be held

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Tuesday 4 April 1882, page 4

The Fire in Rundle-street,— The inquest on Marshall's fire was concluded on Monday, when no new evidence of any importance was adduced. The Jury, after about half an hour's deliberation, returned a verdict that there was no evidence to show how the fire originated, and while expressing their dis-approval of the prevarication of some of the witnesses employed by Marshall & Co., and their regret at the inefficient state of the Fire Brigades' apparatus, complimented the brigade and the police upon their services at the fire. The Coroner and Jury desire us to express their thanks to Mr. Parr for the use of his auction-room.

South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Tuesday 4 April 1882, page 4

The Advertiser TUESDAY, APRIL 4, 1882.

LIFE is too short for many such inquests as that just concluded upon the fire which destroyed the premises and draper's stock of Messrs. Marshall & Co., in Rundle-street, last month. This enquiry has occupied the attention of a jury on six days, and has been extended over more than three weeks, with the result that probably every one expected—there was not any evidence to show how the fire originated. Inquests on fires are necessarily unsatisfactory; the cases are comparatively so rare in which the cause of the conflagration can be ascertained. Un-like murders, big fires leave, from the nature of things, no traces of the agency by which they were produced ; generally the evidences of crime, carelessness, or accident, as the case may be, are utterly consumed by the flames. Some persons exercise their minds by speculating upon the effect of the system of insurance in producing arson on the part of the owner of the insured property. It has been said that in the enormous majority of cases the property destroyed by fire is insured. This is doubtless the case in towns, because the great majority of people, at any rate those in business, insure their property. Then it has often been re-marked that persons embarrassed in their business seem most liable to have fires, and in many cases the catastrophe instead of ruining them sets them financially upon their feet. Of course these remarks have no bearing upon the recent great fire in this city, as there is no reason to doubt the statements of the firm that they are, if anything, rather under assured. Where fires have been suspicious coroners' inquests have seldom proved anything to convict any one of foul play, and the insurance companies have of course been obliged to pay up and look as pleasant as possible under the circumstances. There are now and then cases of convictions for arson arising out of coroners' inquests, and undoubtedly it is desirable that inquests should be held, as where there is destruction of property accompanied by danger to life, and there is a probability of the fire having been wilfully caused or of it being to the interest of some one that it should take place, it would be a mistake to pass the affair over without either magisterial enquiry or investigation by a jury. This would be to grant impunity to the incendiary. The coroner in summing up in this case of Marshall & Co.'s fire, observed that inquests were not held in the interests of insurance companies, but of the public. Certainly this is the case; any questions as to value of stock consumed, amount of insurance, or carelessness on the part of the insured are, or should be, put only in order to throw light upon the probable cause of the fire, or the question whether anyone, and if so who, had a motive for wishing it to take place. In this

case suspicious of malicious agency were directed against a young man who first gave the alarm, and the husband and one or more of the children of a woman who had been in the employ of the firm, and by them prosecuted successfully for theft; but no evidence was adduced that in the least degree told against the denials of this family that they had any hand in the affair, or against the alibi to which they swore. The young man referred to was subjected to a rather searching cross-examination with regard to his nocturnal perambulations, and the fact that he had received payment for first intelligence of several fires. It is said that in London there are persons who make pocket-money by setting fire to premises and then giving the alarm. It is to be hoped we have not yet in our community so monstrous a development of crime, and doubtless it seems very hard that any one endeavoring to rouse the authorities with the least possible delay to extinguish a fire should be accused of having caused it. It may also be said that, a young man whose avocations or habits keep him in the streets at all hours of the night is a particularly likely person to witness the breaking out of a fire, and if he cannot give the alarm without being suspected of arson his safest course will be to let it burn and say nothing. A little reflection, however, will show such a night-bird that he will be free from suspicion if he does not take payment for giving the alarm. All the witnesses who slept on Messrs. Marshall & Co.'s premises agreed in stating that to the best of their belief the fire broke out in or about the cutter's room. The cutter was a heavy smoker, but never indulged in the weed while in his sanctum sanctorum, nor did he permit such profanation on the part of any of his visitors or customers. The natural idea was that the fire occurred through the want of caution of some one. There is nothing in a draper's establishment to lead to spontaneous combustion, and the theory of supernatural agency could not be entertained. But where could the carelessness be detected? It was not traceable to any of the female assistants, and for the first few days of the enquiry the depositions went to prove that the male helps were models of exemplary deportment. They never drank or stopped out late, or let themselves in with latchkeys. They seemed almost too good, or at least it seemed almost too good to be true that so many very excellent young persons could be collected in one establishment. The jury, however, was composed more or less of worldlings, who in their cynicism doubted the existence of such an aggregation of virtue; and upon closer questioning and the re-examination of some of the witnesses, it was found the assistants on the doomed premises were not all saints and anchorites, but were in fact very much like the same number of any other young men to be found in similar establishments. They did not all go to bed like proper little children at a fixed early hour; some occasionally let others in at various watches of the night, and now and then one might perhaps find it difficult to walk on a bee line, or to articulate with the clearness and the correctness of emphasis that would satisfy a fastidious elocutionist. Under such circumstances pipes or cigars may be dropped, or there may be a heedlessness about gas or matches, and a great fire may consequently break out without any possibility of a discovery of whose carelessness caused it. The coroner and jury concurred in praising the conduct of the police and firemen engaged in extinguishing the flames, but very properly spoke in strong terms of the disgraceful condition of the appliances with which they worked. For the rotten hoses the fire insurance companies are to blame, for the superintendent of fire brigades frequently called their attention to this matter, and asked for sound hoses, but in vain. We do not think it is the duty of the insurance companies to bear alone the expense of the fire brigade, but having undertaken the duty it would have been better for them-selves had they carried it out in a sensible fashion. With sound hoses all the damage to Donaldson, Andrews, & Sharland's stock,

amounting to £10,000 or £12,000, would have been prevented, and probably the destruction of property in Marshall and Co.'s building would have been less by £20,000 or £30,000 than it has been. To save one or two hundred pounds in fire brigade appliances the insurance companies have lost £30,000 or £40,000. Inferior as the machinery was, however, we cannot but be thankful that the fire brigade was not broken up several months ago when such a step was contemplated. Had it been disbanded the destruction of property by this fire would have been enormous. It would have stretched to King William-street, and would have swept everything before it to the eastward as far as Pulteney-street, unless it could be checked by blowing up buildings in its course. It is to be hoped that the city will never run such an insane risk, but that the fire brigade will be established on a proper footing, under the management of the corporation, and that an equitable arrangement will be arrived at as to the cost of supporting it.

Adelaide Observer (SA : 1843 - 1904), Saturday 8 April 1882, page 40

THE LATE FIRE IN RUNDLE STREET.

The City Coroner (Mr. T. Ward, J.P.), resumed the inquest on the late fire at Messrs. James Marshall & Co.'s premises at Parr's Old Exchange room, King William-street, on Monday, at 6 p.m. Mr. I. Simmons was Foreman of the Jury. Mr. W. Symon appeared on behalf of Messrs. Donaldson, Andrews, & Sharland and the Transatlantic Fire Insurance Company; Mr. E. B. Grundy for the Hon. J. Hodgkiss; Mr. T. W. Fleming for Messrs. Marshall & Co.; Hon. C. Mann, Q.C. (Crown Solicitor), for the police; and Hon. J. C. Bray for the Phoenix Company.

William Reid said—I live in George-street, Adelaide. I was not in the employment of Marshall and Co. My mother and sister were. I know there has been a fire at Marshall's, about 4 o'clock on a Sunday morning. I do not remember the date. I was first told of it by a Mrs. Hopkins about 4 o'clock on the Sunday afternoon. On the Saturday before the fire I was at home in North Adelaide.

The Coroner—I will warn you that you need not answer any question which you think may commit you. Witness—I was not in Adelaide all day on the Saturday before the fire nor on the Sunday. My father and younger sister were at home on Saturday. My father is now in the Hospital. I went to bed about half-past 9 on Saturday night. My father was in bed before that, and my sister went to sleep shortly after me. I was not disturbed during the night by any one getting up. I got out of bed at 8 o'clock on Sunday morning. I have never heard any threats used about Marshall's by my father, mother, or sister. The Coroner—Did you talk over matters before your mother got into trouble? Witness—No. The Coroner—Your mother knew she would get into trouble before she was actually arrested? Witness—I don't know. Bethia Reid, the last witness's sister, recalled, corroborated his evidence.

The Coroner said that he had no further evidence to bring forward, and regretted that he had not been able to bring forward more substantial evidence as to the origin of the fire. He need hardly remind the Jury that it was always a matter of great difficulty to get at the origin of fires. The present one had been very disastrous, and by a marvellous intervention of Providence several lives had been saved which might easily have been lost, Mrs. Sharland, the housekeeper, being still very unwell from the injuries she received on the occasion. Nearly all the witnesses had shown that the fire originated in the cutter's room or near it, and, therefore, so far as the spot where the fire started was concerned, that matter had been cleared up by the evidence. The Jury had heard so much about the cutter and other

employes smoking that he would not detain them on that point. They had, however, heard of the irregular habits of the young men in the establishment—smoking and coming in after hours, sometimes the worse for drink—and nothing was more likely to be the cause of setting a place on fire than such habits. So far as Staer and Green were concerned there was nothing to connect them with the fire. It had often been said that inquests on fires were held for the benefit of the Insurance Companies, but such was not the case. They were held in the interests of the general public. However, he was led to the conclusion that the present low rates of insurance had a tendency to render people careless in protecting their property, and sometimes went further by inducing people to commit a criminal action. He only mentioned this as part of his duty. Another matter he could not pass over was a certain amount of carelessness displayed by Marshall's firm. They had not thought it necessary during two and a half years to take stock, and he could not help remarking upon the fact. How could any man of business decide on insuring to the extent of £55,000 without taking stock, and how could he get at the value of his stock except by stock-taking? He presumed that this fact would suggest to the Jury's mind that Marshall & Co. were not so careful in the management of their business as they might be. He had observed the reluctance with which all Marshall's employes had given their evidence, which as honest men they would not have exhibited. Their evidence had to be dragged out of them. Five or six young men swore they never smoked nor saw any one smoke on the premises, and then evidence was adduced which showed that Evans and several others had smoked upstairs. This kind of thing threw a sort of suspicion over the fire which otherwise could not have existed. He had now to deal with a very important subject, namely, the inefficient state of the Fire Brigade. Mr. Andrews had told the Jury that but for the inefficiency of the Brigade's gear the fire would not have extended to the premises of his firm, and several witnesses had given similar evidence, adding that more property might have been saved from Marshall's had the Brigade been thoroughly efficient—not but that the men who were there worked to their utmost. The Acting-Superintendent said there were only twelve firemen present when four dozen would not have been too many. This was a very serious matter, and he expected the Jury to give it full consideration. He would again express his regret at not being able to bring forward more evidence as to the origin of the fire, but forty witnesses had now been examined, and he was sure that the Jury as well as he had done their best to sift the matter. He would now leave them to consider their verdict, and although they could not speak positively as to the origin of the fire, if they thought it was originated by the carelessness of the young men living on the premises they might express that opinion. He thought it bad taste of Allnutt and Evans to depute to a third person the important duty they held of locking up without the knowledge of the firm, especially when it was shown the third party was not fit for the position.

The Jury, after a consultation for nearly half an hour, returned the following verdict:— "The Jury unanimously agree that there is no evidence to show how the fire at Marshall & Co.'s originated, and express their disapproval at the prevaricating manner of the evidence of many of the young men witnesses, especially Messrs. Allnutt and Evans, and would add that while condemning the proved insufficient and defective hose and appliances they think the firemen and police engaged deserve every commendation."

[Wednesday 19th April 1882 - The Adelaide Fire Brigade drill, Hutt-street.](#)

South Australian Weekly Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1881 - 1889), Saturday 22 April 1882, page 16

The Adelaide Fire Brigade were called out for drill on Wednesday morning, April 19, at 6 o'clock, at Hutt-street. All the firemen were present when the muster roll was called. Mr. Baker (the superintendent) then introduced Capt. Richard Moore, the gentleman he has engaged to act with and for him on account of his age and failing health. The superintendent, with Capt. Moore's assistance, made a thorough overhaul and inspection of the brigade and plant, and afterwards put the firemen through the ladder and hose drill. The fifteen lengths, of 50 feet each, of hose pipes were all tested at a pressure of 60 lbs. to the square inch, and stood this pressure, and only one length out of fifteen proved defective, so that 700 feet out of the 750 feet of India-rubber hose stood the test; but all of this hose pipe has been in use several years, and is very liable to burst when roughly handled at fires. Appended is Captain Richard Moore's report on the Adelaide Fire Brigade and plant "Adelaide, S. A., April 19, 1882.— A. J. Baker, Esq.— Dear Sir — Having attended this morning at your monthly drill I take this opportunity of reporting to you my opinion as to the present state of the fire brigade under your command. The men work well, and as far as I have seen are quite up to any brigade in the colonies in their present system of drill, &c. The appliances are all in good working order with the exception of one 50-foot length of hose ; and with the existing means at your disposal I consider the arrangements very good, although as the city increases and many large buildings are erected, I have no doubt you will require a more effective fire plant to cope with any emergency that may arise, especially in the saving of life from fire. — I am. &c, Richard Moore.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Wednesday 17 May 1882, page 4

PROTECTION AGAINST FIRE.

That exceedingly energetic, hard-worked, and versatile officer, the Town Clerk of Adelaide, has prepared a Bill to provide for the establishment of Fire Brigades. This measure is to be laid before the Municipal Corporations' Association, at whose instance it has been drafted, and it is to be hoped that they will lose no time in engrafting their suggestions upon it, so that it may be ready for Parliamentary consideration as soon as the session opens. This season of the year is not the best for discussing the question, but in view of the lessons brought home with such startling force to the Insurance Companies, to the citizens, and to the public at large by the destructive conflagration at Messrs. Marshall and Co's., it may be taken for granted that the Legislature will recognise the urgency of the case, and will lend its aid in promptly passing the Bill into law. It is well known that the present arrangements for extinguishing fires is not only a makeshift one, but that it will be discontinued in August, so that there is really no time to be lost. The idea of having absolutely no provision for the protection of city property against fire is too serious to be contemplated without the utmost alarm, and no pains should be spared in bringing about a better state of things. In all past arrangements for the maintenance of a Fire Brigade the great draw-back has been the absence of system. There has been an active Superintendent and a number of thoroughly efficient fire-men, but they have been at every turn thwarted in their operations by the want of means. The appliances at their command have been ridiculously inadequate, and they themselves have been kept together more by downright love of the work and by unbounded confidence in their commander-in-chief, whose efforts to perform his duty have been incessant and untiring, than by any monetary recompense they have received, or by the esprit de corps which grows out of association with a well-managed and effective service. The Brigade has been under the control of the Insurance Companies, who have always chafed at the responsibility, and begrudged the amount they have had to pay for the

support of the organization. No wonder, under these circumstances, that it has languished ; that the Superintendent has been compelled to keep up a running fire of remonstrance on account of the antiquated character and deficient supply of the apparatus placed at his disposal ; and that the citizens have had an uneasy feeling that the protection afforded their property was not such as they could wish or had a right to expect. Obviously the first thing to be attended to in placing matters upon a better footing is to provide for the proper establishment, maintenance, and management of a Fire Brigade, and this the Town Clerk proposes to do by creating a Board consisting of five persons, whose jurisdiction is to be co-extensive with the bounds of the municipality. To this Board, in the case of the City of Adelaide, is to be transferred all the plant belonging to the Brigade now in existence—not a particularly valuable asset —"together with the fire escape heretofore purchased by the Corporation jointly with Her Majesty's Government." Whatever further appliances may be necessary the Board is authorized to obtain. It is further empowered to appoint a Superintendent; who is to have the general superintendence of the fire-men and almost unlimited powers of control in the case of an outbreak of fire ; to recover fees upon a moderate scale from the owners of uninsured premises who have had the benefit of the services of the Brigade ; to make by-laws for the regulation of their own proceedings, and otherwise to discharge the duties properly attaching to the office they hold. It is significant that whilst it is proposed that three members of the Board shall be appointed upon the nomination of the Council of the municipality, the other two being selected by the Government, there is no provision in the Bill requiring the Corporation to contribute towards the cost of the Brigade. The Public Treasury of the province is to be held responsible for one-third of the total outlay of the Board, and the Insurance Companies, it would appear, are to pay the remainder. With this view they may be rated according to the amount of business done by them. Their books are to be open to the inspection of the Board, and any reluctance on their part to meet their share of the cost of this new establishment is to be overcome by the gentle pressure which Magistrates in their summary jurisdiction are authorized to bring to bear upon recalcitrant debtors. It is no doubt a perfectly fair thing that the Companies should be required to bear the chief burden of the cost of maintaining the Brigade and paying the expenses of the Board — including, of course, a moderate honorarium to the members; it is equally fair that the Government should contribute something in return for the protection afforded to their property; but it is not reasonable that the Corporation should have the control of the whole establishment, through their nominees upon the Board, without being called upon to bear some portion of the cost. The Bill in its present shape is more likely to be acceptable to the Municipal Corporations' Association than if it contained a provision requiring the municipalities to contribute ; but the main thing is to submit the measure in a form in which it can count upon the approval of Parliament. To submit it as it is to subject it to the risk of rejection — a contingency which must be carefully guarded against. There are clauses sanctioning the employment of the Brigade beyond the limits of the municipality to which it belongs — and, by-the-way, every municipality can have its Board and its Brigade— and providing for the remuneration to be paid to it for such special service. In connection with these there is in the Bill a choice specimen of Worsnopian drafts, or is it only a printer's error? It is stated that the owner and occupier of the premises where the fire has occurred shall jointly and severally be liable to defray all the incidental expenses of the visit of the Brigade, and it is added — 'In case of difference between the Board and the owner and occupier of such property, or either of them, the amount of the expenses, as well as the propriety of the Fire Brigade attending such fire (if the property

thereof be disputed), may be recovered in a summary way.¹ One is curious to know how the propriety of the proceeding is to be assessed in pounds, shillings, and pence, to say nothing of the arbitrariness of settling a bona-fide dispute by compelling the disputant by summary process to comply with the demand made upon him. Apart from this extraordinary provision, the Bill is fairly well drafted, and, with the alterations we have suggested, is worthy of being sent up for the endorsement of Parliament.

South Australian Weekly Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1881 - 1889), Saturday 27 May 1882, page 4

FIRE BRIGADE BILL.

The unsatisfactory nature of the means provided for the protection of property against loss or damage by fire in Adelaide and several of the larger country towns has long been a theme for adverse comment. The imposition of the whole burden of maintaining an efficient fire brigade in Adelaide on the insurance companies doing business in the city was a palpable injustice, but so long as they were willing to discharge that duty, those most interested, the property owners and ratepayers, were not likely to be very solicitous for a change. However, the determination of the insurance companies to refuse to protect any longer the property of the general public from fire necessitated a different arrangement. The negotiations between the Government, the insurance companies, and the Municipal Corporations Association, are of too recent date to require further reference just how, but the result is to be seen in a draft Bill "for an Act to provide for the establishment of fire brigades," prepared, we believe, by the city town clerk, and issued under the auspices of the association. The Bill consists of 29 clauses and a schedule, the latter setting out the fees payable to those connected with the brigades for attendance and labor at fires. Amongst the most important provisions in the Bill are those relating to the appointment of fire brigade boards in the municipalities brought within the operation of the Bill by proclamation in the Government Gazette. These boards are to consist of five members, three of whom are to be appointed on the nomination of the council of the municipality. Upon the constitution of the board, three of whom shall form a quorum, it shall become a corporation with a perpetual seal, and as such may sue and be sued, acquire property, make contracts, &c. In the event of a vacancy occurring on the board it shall be filled up by the Governor on the recommendation of the local council. The duties of these boards shall be to extinguish fires and to protect life and property ; and with a view to the performance of these they shall provide and maintain efficient fire-brigades. The Bill also sets out that on the appointment of the board for the City of Adelaide all the plant at present belonging to the fire brigade shall become vested in it as well as the fire-escape purchased some time ago by the Corporation of Adelaide and the Government. The chief feature of the Bill is contained in the clauses giving effect to the conclusions arrived at during the course of the negotiations already referred to on the question of the maintenance of the fire brigades. Clause 9 provides that the Treasurer shall pay to the board in quarterly instalments out of the general revenue a sum of money equal to one-third of the total outlay of the board during the preceding three months, and not being more than £250. The insurance companies as their share towards the general fund shall pay annually not less than £10 after a rate of so many shillings (number to be fixed) in the thousand pounds on the gross amount insured by them, except by way of reinsurance, in connection with property within the municipality, and pro rata for any sum less than a thousand pounds or for a less time than a year. Presumably the balance of the expenditure in keeping the brigades effective will fall upon the municipalities. In order that the boards may be in a position to assess the amount that shall be contributed by each

insurance company the companies are required to furnish returns to the boards of the gross amount of their insurances in the particular districts re-presented by the board every six months. These returns are to be verified by a declaration of the secretary or agent of the company sending them in, or by some other person cognisant of the fact. Not only may all amounts owing by the companies be recovered in a summary way, but the companies are required to allow their books to be inspected by the authorised officers of the boards for the purpose of ascertaining the amount of their insurances, and false returns entail heavy penalties. If the services of the fire brigades have been utilised in connection with a fire on uninsured property, the owner of such property shall pay to the board a sum of money calculated on the basis of the schedule attached to the Bill. At the option and with the consent of a board the fire brigade under its control may be employed on special services, and even proceed beyond the limits of the municipality in connection with which it has been established. The commissioner of police or the senior officer at the station nearest to where a fire occurs is required, on receiving information, to send a sufficient number of constables to the scene for the purpose of maintaining order and pre-serving life and property. At all inquests on fires the local board may if it deems fit be represented, tender evidence, and examine witnesses. In all cases of dispute between the parties interested and the boards the Local Court of Adelaide is the appellate tribunal

Border Watch (Mount Gambier, SA : 1861 - 1954), Wednesday 19 July 1882, page 3

TELEGRAMS

(From our own Correspondents.)

The Adelaide Fire Brigade met for drill last night in Carrington-street, this being their last drill under the present agreement to serve as firemen in the Adelaide Fire Insurers' Association. The Fire Brigade agreed to arrange for a dinner to be held at the end of the month, when the present Adelaide Fire Brigade will be disbanded.

South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Tuesday 25 July 1882, page 5

ADELAIDE CORPORATION.

MONDAY, JULY 24.

Present—All except Cr. Bohm.

MAYOR'S REPORT.

Cr. Roberts asked why the footpaths in Gawler-place had not been asphalted close to the building line. The MAYOR said the surveyor had reported that the reason was that some of the premises stood back from the footpath, and the council had no power to lay tar pavements on private property. In answer to the same councillor his WORSHIP said he did not think the Fire Brigade would be disbanded until arrangements had been made for establishing another. In all probability the brigade would be disbanded this month, but from a conversation which he had had with the secretary of the Fire Insurance Association some time ago he could hardly imagine that he would be unwilling to allow the brigade to remain intact until the Bill had passed through Parliament. He would take care to again interview the secretary on the subject.