

Adelaide Fire Brigade 1885

Locations of Fire Reels

Sands and McDougall Directory

Hindley Street North between Grey Street and Ottoway Terrace, North side. Fire Reel Number 2.
James Wedlock at the Victoria Foundry.

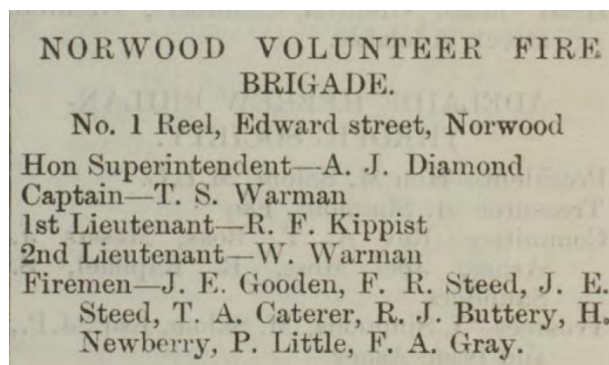
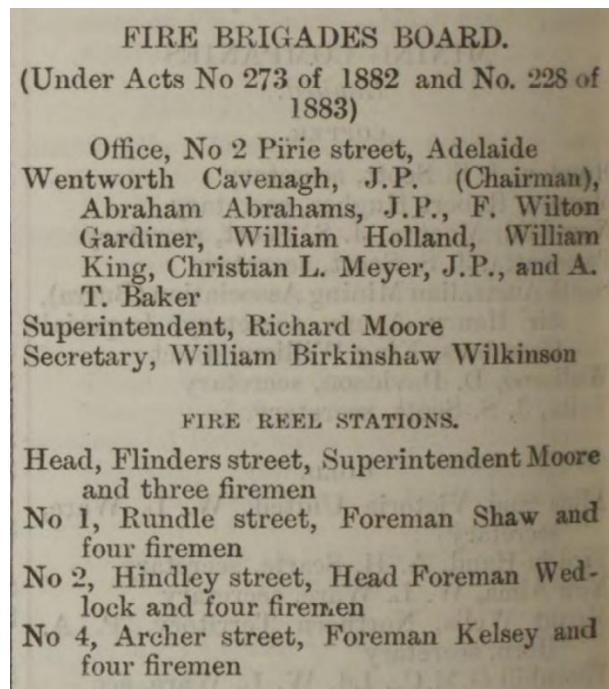
North Terrace Elder Street South side. Fire Reel Number 1, with Albert Shaw as groom.

Archer Street West, South side on the corner of Jeffcott Street. Number 4 station

Norwood. Edward Street East side. Norwood Volunteer Fire Brigade Station, one shop from the corner of the Parade.

Norwood Volunteer Fire Brigade Office in the Norwood Town Hall with R. E. Kippist listed as secretary.

Glanville. Carlisle Street, Fire Reel Number 11 with A. J. Baker as a Turncock at the Waterworks.



South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Saturday 21 February 1885, page 7

ADELAIDE FIRE BRIGADES BOARD.

Present—Messrs. W. Cavenagh (chair-man), F. W. Gardiner, C. L. Meyer, R. O. Fox, Theo. Hack, and H. Y. Sparks. An apology was received from Mr. E. M. Ashwin, who is absent from the colony. Accounts amounting to £68 14s. 9d. were passed for payment. The secretary (Mr. W. B. Wilkinson) reported that the following calls for the first quarter of the current year had not been paid: — H.M. Government, £302 15s. 4d.; Corporation of Adelaide, £116 18s. 6d.; Alliance, British Foreign Insurance, £2 10s.; London and ; Lancashire Insurance Company, £4 19s. 2d.; Mutual Fire Insurance Company of South Australia, £23 19s. 10d.; total, £451 2s. 10d. It was resolved that applications be made to the Government and corporation for immediate payment, and that notices should be sent to the insurance companies that if the amounts owing by them are not paid within three days legal proceedings will be taken for the recovery. A letter dated February 13 was received from the town clerk of Adelaide, informing the board that the City Council would have much pleasure in complying with the application for a set of city survey plans in order that all the fire plugs may be signified, thereby to facilitate inspection. A letter dated February 5 was received from the secretary of the local fire brigades committee, Mount Gambier, enquiring as to what plant would be required for the establishment of a brigade in that town. The secretary to reply that the plant now belonging to Mr. Ehret, which had been offered to the board for £100, had been inspected by Mr. A. J. Baker, a former member of the board, and was ample for all requirements; and that the board had consented to accept the offer of this plant, subject to the approval of a Mount Gambier board (when elected), and conditionally on the Corporation of Mount Gambier purchasing a water cart, included in the plant, for the sum of £20, the balance of expenditure, £80, to be borne equally by the Corporation of Mount Gambier and the Adelaide Board. A letter dated February 11 was received from the secretary of the Local Fire Brigade Board, Port Augusta, requesting the Adelaide Board to subsidise the salaries of a staff of deputy-superintendent and five men instead of three as at present. A reply to be sent that the suggestion will have the consideration of the board during the reorganisation of the brigades. A letter dated February 16 was received from the city coroner inspecting the cost of turning over the debris after fires, and stating that he did not consider it fair that his department should be saddled with the expenditure connected therewith. A reply to be sent intimating that the subject would receive the consideration of the board. A letter dated February 17 was received from Mr. W. H. Gray, referring to a fire which had taken place on some uninsured property belonging to him in Allen-street, off Hutt-street, and informing the board that as the property was leased to one Carruthers, and as the shed burnt was not worth the amount, viz., £9 6s. 6d., charged for the attendance of the fire-reels, he considered the claim made by the board to be excessive, but was prepared to pay any reasonable cost. Mr. Gray's attention to be called to clause 35 of the Fire Brigades Act, and notice given to him that if amount claimed be not paid within seven days legal proceedings will be taken. A draft of the annual report was placed upon the table. The Government printer to be asked to print 150 copies of same. A requisition suggesting the advisability of reinstating Superintendent Moore was received. It was decided that Mr. Richard Moore be appointed acting superintendent for one month, dating from February 28, And that he arrange with the foreman and firemen of reels No. 1, 2, and 4 to continue their present agreements for the same term, viz., one month. It was also resolved that the

consideration of all applications for employment in the brigades should be deferred until the next board meeting.

South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Tuesday 24 February 1885, page 6

FIRE AT KRAHENBUL'S.

Another fire broke out on Monday morning on the premises known as Howell's Corner, situated at the junction of Hindley and King William streets. Shortly after 1 o'clock Constable Dempsey was passing along King William-street when he noticed a fire in the north-western corner of the shop of Mr. Krahenbuhl, jeweller. He speedily gave the alarm, and the head station, Wedlock's, and Baker's reels were quickly in attendance. By this time the fire had spread to the adjoining shop, occupied by Messrs. Warhurst & Pope, and to the staircase leading to Mr. H. Jones's photographic establishment, but the three reels got to work quickly, and within a few minutes had extinguished the flames. It is fortunate that the fire was discovered so soon after it had begun to make headway, as it was found after it had been got under that the flames had already forced their way to the upper floor, and within five minutes would no doubt have taken a firm hold on the woodwork of the second flat. In the rooms of Mr. Jones and Mr. Philips, which are situated just above Mr. Krahenbuhl's shop, the skirting-boards and wall paper near the floor were discolored by the heat, and in places the carpets on the floors were scorched and blackened. Mr. Krahenbuhl's stock is injured to a great extent, the whole of it being damaged by fire or water, or blackened by smoke. Messrs. Warhurst's stock was not greatly damaged by fire, but as it consists almost entirely of fancy wares and stationery the water and smoke played sad havoc with the goods. A light was always kept burning in Mr. Krahenbuhl's shop at night, and the shutters were of open ironwork, which enabled the fire to be seen before it had made much headway. No clue has yet been discovered as to the origin of the fire, but it is not probable that it was the work of an incendiary, as the whole of the interior of the shop was visible to any one passing in consequence of the light thrown by the gas jet which was alight at the time. Mr. Krahenbuhl's stock and fittings were insured in the Colonial Mutual Insurance Office for £1,340; Messrs. Warhurst and Pope's stock for £1,100 in the Queen Insurance Office, and their fittings for £100 in the same office. Mr. Jones's stock and fittings were insured for £600 in the Phoenix Office, and Mr. Phillips's furniture was insured for £100. The property is owned by the Hon. Alexander Hay, and is insured for £2,400 in the South Australian Company's Office. The city coroner will hold an inquest at the South Australian Club Hotel this afternoon.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Friday 13 March 1885, page 2

Fire in Grenfell-street.

The cry of fire was again raised in the city on Thursday night, and in consequence of the alarm being given by the watchman on duty at Messrs. S. Mayfield & Son's premises in Rundle-street, the rumor quickly spread that the warehouse and workshop of this well-known firm were in flames. This fear, however, proved to be unfounded, and it was learned that what at first threatened to be an extensive fire had broken out in Messrs. Barker & Chambers's Sturt Horse Bazaar. At about ten minutes to 11 Messrs. Mayfield and Sons' watchman noticed that the bazaar stables, which abut on the south wall of his employers' yard were on fire, and at once gave the alarm by telephone to the superintendent of fire brigades. The ostler, who sleeps on Messrs. Barker & Chambers's premises, heard a crackling

noise as of burning deal about the same time, and at once rushed into the stable where a gas-jet was burning to see if the jet had ignited the wooden floor of the loft, which is situated immediately above it. He found that this had not occurred, but on entering the adjoining stable he discovered that the centre portion of the roof was burning fiercely, and that the flames, aided by a light wind, were spreading rapidly towards the hayloft, from which the stable was separated by only a light wooden partition. He immediately dispatched a messenger for a fire-reel, and with the assistance of one or two persons, who answered his calls, removed the horses, including a valuable draught stallion, named Britain's Glory, to a place of safety. The No. 1 (Shaw's) and the head station reel, under Superintendent Moore, were quickly in attendance, and although it was fully an hour before the straw, hay, and chaff in the loft ceased burning all danger of the fire spreading was quickly past. About three tons of straw was stacked in the loft during the two days preceding the fire, and this in addition to a small quantity of hay, chaff, and bran, was totally destroyed. But beyond this the damage done was slight. The timbers of the roof of the loft were very much charred, and the light planking which supported the ventilators of the stable was destroyed. It is fortunate the fire was discovered before it had time to obtain any great hold on the premises, as the bazaar, which is situated in Grenfell-street, to the east of the Sturt Hotel, is surrounded by valuable buildings. No clue has been obtained as to the origin of the outbreak, as the only light in the stables for some time prior to the discovery was a gas-jet in the stable beneath the hay-loft, which was harmlessly burning when the brigade arrived. If the flames had broken out in the stalls it might have been concluded that a lucifer dropped in the horses' bedding had caused the mischief, but there is every reason to suppose from the statements of those who first saw the fire that it started in the roof of the stable to the west of the hay loft. A posse of mounted and foot police under inspectors Shaw and Sullivan kept the premises clear, and the firemen were thus allowed full scope for action, The whole of the premises are insured in the Southern British Company, the total policy being for £2,300. Of this £200 is on the buildings, £150 on the carriages, &c., and £150 on the horses. The policy is a general one, the particular part of the place damaged not being specially covered.

It is the intention of the city coroner to hold an enquiry into the matter of the fire on Monday next.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Monday 16 March 1885, page 2

Fire at the Sturt Bazaar.

CORONER'S INQUEST.

THIS DAY

An enquiry into the cause of the fire which occurred at the Sturt Bazaar, Grenfell-street, on Thursday night, March 12, was held by the city coroner (Mr. T. Ward) at the Sturt Hotel on Monday morning. Mr. Chas. W. Stuart was foreman of the jury. Inspector Bee attended on behalf of the police, and Mr. Kirker watched the proceedings on behalf of the South British Insurance Company.

Henry Hodgson, ostler, in the employ of Messrs. Barker & Chambers, said he slept on the bazaar premises near where the fire originated. A load of straw was taken into the loft about 5 o'clock on the evening of the fire. The man who brought the straw did not smoke on the premises. Was in the loft pitching the straw back while the driver threw it into the loft. Did not enter it after the driver left at 6 o'clock. Saw no one hanging about the premises after 6

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14 April 2026

o'clock, with the exception of one or two customers. Was first attracted to the fire by a crackling sound, and on going into the yard saw flames issuing from the second skylight from the west end of the main stable. The fire was spreading rapidly, but had apparently not reached the loft at that time. Went into the stable beneath the loft, but saw no signs of fire in the loft. Was of opinion that the fire started at the west end of the stable which adjoined the loft. Could in no way account for the fire. (The coroner said from the appearance of the premises that the witness must be mistaken in asserting that the fire started at the west end of the building). By Inspector Bee—The last man he saw prior to returning to his room before the fire originated was a dealer who came in to see the other ostler. Was quite sober, but did not think the other ostler was quite sober. Had any one crossed the yard with his boots on should have heard their footsteps on the pebbles.

Richard Moore, Superintendent of Fire Brigades, said he was called to the fire at Messrs. Barker & Chambers's at 10.47 on Thursday night. Found the loft well on fire, and the flames running west-ward along the timbers of the roof. Got the fire under in ten minutes. Had no doubt that the fire started in the north-east corner of the hayloft. Turned over the debris, but found nothing suspicious. The partition which divided the stable from the loft was ablaze when the reels arrived, and it was impossible to tell whether the door in it was open or shut.

Patrick McGaffin, head ostler at the Sturt Bazaar, said he left the stables at 7 o'clock on the night of the fire. Everything was then safe, and there was no sign of fire. Left Harry in charge. Returned at 7.45, and left again at 8 o'clock. Returned again at 10.45, when the loft was on fire. Saw the flames from the corner of Bent and Grenfell streets.

(Left sitting.)

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Tuesday 17 March 1885, page 6

CORONERS' INQUESTS

THE FIRE AT THE STURT BAZAAR.

The City Coroner (Mr. T. Ward) held an enquiry, on Monday morning at the Sturt Hotel into the circumstances attending the fire which broke out in the Sturt Bazaar, Grenfell-street, on the night of Thursday, the 12th inst. Mr. Kirker appeared on behalf of the South British Insurance Company; Inspector Bee represented the police. Mr. C. W. Stuart was chosen foreman of the Jury. Henry Hodgson; ostler in the employ of Messrs, Barker & Chambers, deposed that he slept on the premises close to where the fire broke out. Got a load of straw in on the afternoon that the fire broke out. The job was finished about 5 p.m. The straw was put in at the front door of the loft. Witness helped to stack the straw back. Neither he nor the man who brought the straw were smoking at that time, although he smoked in his bedroom afterwards. Did not notice any smell of fire till he heard a crackling noise about 10.40 p.m. when the fire broke out. Witness was reading in his bedroom at the time. On going out saw the blaze going through the skylight— the second light from the west end of the strides. Did not go to the loft then to see if there was any fire there. Did not think it had got so far then. Took out a horse from the stable just under the loft, and had there been a fire in the loft at the time would probably have noticed the shadow. Gave the alarm, and the firemen turned up very quickly and put the fire out. Could not account for the origin of the fire. By Inspector Bee— The last man he saw was dealer named Joe, at 10 p.m. He came to look for the other ostler. Witness was quite sober, but he didn't think Joe was. The stairs leading to the loft were inside the stable. Thought some of the clerks were in the office a

little before that time. Had any one come in at that time and mounted the steps he must have heard him if he had boots on. Superintendent Moore, of the Fire Brigade, was then called, and stated that he received a call at 10.47 p.m. on the night of the fire. Found the hayloft well on fire. The flames were running along the side westward. Got the fire under in ten minutes, Believed the fire started in the north-east corner of the loft. Turned over the débris, but found nothing of a suspicious nature. Patrick McGaffan, head ostler at the Sturt Bazaar, stated that he left the stables at 7 p.m. on the night of the fire, when everything seemed quite safe. Left the other ostler in charge. Returned at 7.45 p.m. There was no smell of fire then. Left at 8 p.m., and did not return till 10.45 p.m., when the place was on fire. Had no idea what started the fire. Assisted to take in the straw in the afternoon, and was in the loft packing it. About six months ago people used occasionally to get into the loft by mounting the steps and sleeping there, and one man was sometimes found sleeping in the stalls underneath. He got the police to shift them, and he had never seen any one sleeping either in the loft or stalls since. Saw J. Hetherington, one of the men employed on Mr. Chambers's farm, on the night of the fire. Witness did not sleep on the premises. There was plenty of room in the loft after the straw had been delivered, for anybody to sleep there, and there was no reason why somebody should not have gone up that night. Thomas Lenane, drover, employed by Messrs. Barker & Chambers, was on the premises about 7.45 p.m. on Thursday. Had been on the premises off and on the whole day. Did not return after 7.45 p.m., but went home to Mile-End. Joseph Down Hetherington, drover, in the employ of Messrs. Barker & Chambers, said he was on the premises about 9 o'clock on the night of the fire. He left the yard a little after that, and did not return that night He occasionally smoked a cigar, but did not smoke that night. Hugh Chambers, part proprietor of the Sturt Bazaar, said he was out of town when the fire occurred. The buildings were insured for £900, but the stack of straw was entirely uninsured. He did not attribute the fire to any malice against his firm. Leonard Griffiths, who called the brigade, and Police-constable James Hogan were also examined, The latter averred that he saw the fire start on the west side and go eastward. The Coroner pointed out that several witnesses had deposed that the fire originated in the loft and went west-ward, and the appearances were decidedly in favour of this assumption. Detective Thomas Edwards said he was of opinion that the fire was the result of carelessness on the part of some one who had entered the loft for the purpose of resting in it. The Coroner having summed up, the Jury returned a verdict that they were of opinion that the fire started in the yard, but that there was no evidence to show how it originated.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Saturday 25 April 1885, page 7

FIRE BRIGADES BOARD.

Tuesday. April 14.

Present— Messrs. W. Cavenagh (Chairman), E. M. Ashwin. R. O. Fox, F. W. Gardiner, C. L. Meyer, H. Y. Sparks, and W. B. Wilkinson (Secretary).

Accounts amounting to £117 16s. 3d. were passed for payment. The Secretary reported that he had interviewed the Resident Secretary of the Colonial Mutual Insurance Company respecting the claim made by the Board for the balance of contribution due by the above Company on business taken over by it from the Mutual Insurance Company of South Australia (in liquidation), and that the Resident Secretary had promised to lay the matter before the Melbourne Board of the Company. He also reported that on Monday, April 13, Superintendent Salter had taken command of the brigades at 7 p.m. from Acting

Superintendent R. Moore, who relinquished the position from that date. The whole of the firemen in the Adelaide Brigade were present, and gave their new Superintendent a hearty reception. Respecting the application from Mount Gambier, the Superintendent was instructed to procure the necessary plant for that town and forward same without delay. A letter was received asking upon what terms the Board would recognise the Hindmarsh Volunteer Fire Brigade. The Secretary to request a list of officers and men connected with the brigade, with schedule of plant and appliances and information as to the position of the reel station. Attention to be called to clause 42 of the Fire Brigades Act. The Superintendent was instructed to furnish a report on the condition and effectiveness of the city fire stations. R. Shearing was appointed on the permanent staff, and to act as foreman at the head station during the pleasure of the Superintendent.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Monday 1 June 1885, page 3

FIRE BRIGADES BOARD.

THURSDAY, MAY 28.

Present—Messrs. W. Cavenagh (Chairman), E. W. Ashwin, R. O. Fox, Theo. Hack, C. L. Meyer, H. Y. Sparks, and W. B. Wilkinson (Secretary). Accounts amounting to £78 2s. 7d. were passed for payment. The agents of the Colonial Insurance Company of New Zealand wrote, stating that the claim made by the Board for payment of contribution to June 30 was perfectly satisfactory. The Secretary of the Accident Insurance Association of New Zealand requested that he might have an opportunity to tender for accident assurance on the Superintendent and firemen when the present policies cease. To be informed that the suggestion will be taken into consideration when the present policies expire. The Secretary of the Hindmarsh Volunteer Fire Brigade forwarded the official recognition of the H.V.F. Brigade by the Corporation of Hindmarsh. The Secretary of the Port Augusta Local Fire Brigade Board wrote, reporting a fire at Port Augusta on the 25th instant. To be requested to furnish the Board with the names of the offices in which the insurances are effected. The Secretary of the South Australian Insurance Company wrote, respecting an account amounting to £3 15s. claimed by persons assisting at the fire on North-terrace on May 8. To be referred to the Superintendent. The Superintendent's report on the present arrangements for the protection of the Destitute Asylum in case of fire was laid on the table. To be forwarded to the Commissioner of Crown Lands. The Superintendent's report on the Norwood Volunteer Fire Brigade was read. The report being favourable, it was resolved that the Norwood Volunteer Fire Brigade be recognised by the Board. The following resolutions were passed :— "That the Superintendent report to the Town Clerk, Adelaide, any case respecting the existence of premises in a dangerous state, contrary to the by laws, as the Town Clerk had intimated that any such report would have the immediate attention of the Corporation;" "That notice be given to the foreman and firemen at the three reel stations that their services will not be required after June 30 next, as the Board are about to make arrangements for the establishment of a permanent brigade in the city, all the members of the brigade now serving under the Board to have the right of applying for appointment on the permanent staff;" "That a special meeting of the Board take place on Thursday next, at 2.30. to consider the reorganization of the brigade."

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Friday 3 July 1885, page 7

FIRE BRIGADES BOARD.

Wednesday. June 24.

Present — Messrs. W. Cavenagh (Chair man), R. O. Fox, F. W. Gardiner, C. L. Meyer, H. Y. Sparks, and W. B. Wilkinson Secretary).

Accounts amounting to £70 8s. 5d. were passed for payment. The Secretary reported that, in accordance with resolution at a former meeting, Mr. R. Shearing had been appointed Deputy Super-intendent at a salary of £150 per annum, his appointment dating from July 1, and that the Post-Office Department had been re-quested to remove the telephone from No. 2 Station to the new station in Morphett-street on Thursday, the 25th inst., and that the necessary articles had been purchased for the new station. CORRESPONDENCE. The Commissioner of Crown Lands wrote, stating that telephonic communication between the head station and the Norwood and Hindmarsh Volunteer Fire Brigade Stations would cost £37 per annum. Secretary to reply that the Board could not pay the amount, but hoped the Government would provide the communication for the public safety. The same official wrote asking if the Board recommended the appointment of Mr. Alfred E. Brett as a member of the Port Pirie Board, vice Mr. A. Dungey resigned. Secretary to write, stating that the Board recommend the appointment. The Secretary of the Port Pirie Local Brigade Board enquired on what terms the Board would hand over the reel, &c, now in the custody of the Port Pirie Corporation. Secretary to explain the terms, and to request to be furnished with an inventory of the plant and a report on its condition. Telegram, dated June 18, from Secretary Local Fire Brigade Board, Mount Gambier, was received, enquiring cost of reel and plant. The Secretary reported having given the necessary information. The Mount Gambier Local Fire Brigade Board wrote with regard to payment of accounts. The Secretary to request the local Board to pay account for freight and charges, and to furnish the Board with an account for same, together with accounts for advertising and stationery, &c, for inspection. A testimonial to Mr. R. Moore, the late Superintendent, was signed, and the seal of the Board affixed. The Superintendent was instructed to make a report on the Mount Gambier Brigade plant to be forwarded to Mount Gambier. Also, to make arrangements for the North Adelaide Reel to be stationed in a central position in O'Connell-street, and near to Tynte-street, and to engage three men to take charge of same on the terms of instructions given. Resolved that Messrs. Williams & Thomas's tender for uniforms be accepted, provided the price does not exceed £5.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Friday 10 July 1885, page 3

THE EX-FIREMEN'S DINNER.

It was customary amongst the members of the old fire brigade to hold an annual dinner, and although the brigade was disbanded before the time for it arrived this year the custom was honored by the old hands on Thursday evening, when they gathered around the festive board at the Marquis of Lorne Hotel. About eighty gentlemen sat down to dinner, and the chair was occupied by Alderman Shaw, and the vice-chair was filled by Alderman Holland. After the usual loyal toasts had been honored, Alderman Holland, in proposing "The Parliament," said he would support a member who would advocate the payment of members. South Australia as a whole was as well represented in Parliament as any other Australian colony, or even England. The Chairman, in responding, said he believed every man who was returned as a member of the House of Assembly took his seat with a determination to do his duty. But in his opinion the Colton Ministry had not done what was wanted. Had they carried out a more comprehensive scheme so much distress would not have prevailed

at the present time. He hoped, however, the present team would pull them round, but if not he would advocate another change. The payment of members was a question which needed careful consideration. It had worked well in Victoria, and there was not the slightest doubt that if adopted here it would materially assist them in getting the best men available returned to represent them, It was only fair that the men who gave their time for the benefit of the country should receive some remuneration for the time that they devoted to their parliamentary duties. He was opposed to altering the system of three-yearly elections, as a shorter term would not be sufficient to enable the members to do their work efficiently. He was sorry that so many artisans were unable at the present time to obtain employment. Where the tradesmen suffered the whole mercantile world suffered. South Australia was the only Australian colony actually in debt, the other colonies being able to pay the interest on their loans while we were not. Mr. W. F. Stock, in proposing "The ex-firemen," said during his career he had had great pleasure in meeting the old firemen and the ex-superintendent. He hoped they would each succeed in the line of business they had adopted.

Mr. R. Smith, in responding, regretted the possibility of that being the last occasion on which the members of the old fire brigade would meet together under such circumstances. Referring to the formation of the new brigade, he expressed the opinion that there was not a fireman who would refuse to give way to a system which would the better protect life and property. The old brigade had always suffered from great disadvantages through the lack of public support it received and the cheese-paring policy of the fire brigade board. Now that the new brigade had been formed, however, the board had launched out into an increased expenditure of from £200 to £300. It might he said that the ex-members regretted the non-receipt of their salaries—(a voice—"£1 a month")— but at the same time he felt bound to assert that had the board been as liberal in the past as they were now, the old brigade would have done their work quite as well if not better than any other brigade they might appoint. Mr. J. Wedlock thanked those present for the manner in which the toast had been drunk, but refrained from alluding to the actions of the Fire Brigade Board, which, however, he was not pleased with, for fear of saying too much. He would, however, take an opportunity of expressing his views on another occasion. The Vice-Chairman, as an ex-fireman, also responded. Having at one time served on the Fire Brigade Board for two years, he was in a position to testify to the fact that the funds of the board were very low. The insurance companies, however, had now promised them some thing they had never promised before. If their present offer had been made before the old brigade would have done as much, and perhaps more, than the new one, although in a different way. He was given to understand that the promise the insurance companies had made was to pay the extra cost incurred in the adoption of the new system. If this were a fact the present brigade should be properly established, and in a position to meet any case of emergency. At the same time the old members should be always ready and willing to assist at any fire that might occur. In his opinion Mr. Wedlock should have been appointed superintendent. (Hear, hear.) He was as good a man as we could possibly get for the position. Personally he did not know Mr. Salter, but he trusted that gentleman would turn out an efficient officer. It was not right, however, to encourage a system of going out of the colony to procure anything that might be obtained in South Australia, whether it should happen to be men or iron. There was no reason why a man should be superior because he came from Melbourne, Sydney, or England. On the other hand, a local fireman had the advantage of having received colonial experience, and was always ready to do his work properly. Mr. Powditch also responded. He was at a loss to know why the insurance companies should make promises to the Fire

Brigade Board now. It was a great shame that the board should have discharged men who were connected with local fire brigades for a number of years, and replaced them with men who knew nothing. If practice made perfect, the positions should have been offered to firemen who had received practice. He had no desire to say anything hard against Mr. Salter, but the board had cast a slur on the old firemen, which they would not forget in a hurry. The new superintendent seemed to think that it was his duty to attend fires and talk whilst the men were working. It only wanted a large conflagration to break out to let the public see how the new brigade would act. Was it right that the board should discharge men who had risked their lives in their service, and who had always received credit for their work through the papers? Mr. R. Moore, the ex-superintendent of the fire brigade, was thoroughly disgusted with the whole proceedings of the board. He had been twenty years connected with fire brigades in all parts of the world, and had never been treated in such a manner before. The old brigade had worked hard, although they were hampered by the regulations, which only allowed the reels in the various districts in which the fires occurred to turn out. He had always tried to curtail every expense in order to work with the board, but all his efforts had proved futile. The board were only doing now what he advocated long ago, and that was to have one central board, without, however, doing away with the auxiliaries. The proceedings were interspersed with songs and recitations, and the proceedings were brought to a close at an early hour.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Monday 13 July 1885, page 3

FIRE DEFENCE.

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE BRIGADE,

[By our Special Reporter.]

Adelaide has apparently recovered from its baptism of fire. For over three months its citizens have been undisturbed by an alarm, and, save in a few instances, the past conflagrations have become almost obliterated from the minds of the people. Property holders have regained their sense of security, and the officers of the Insurance Companies look forward to a season which will give them prizes instead of blanks in the lottery of insurance business. The outbreaks, however, have shown that "out of evil cometh good." The severity of the losses incurred has not only directed attention to the undesirability of maintaining a system of ridiculously low premiums, but it has also caused searching enquiry to be made into the organization of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade. The controlling Board saw that they had public opinion with them, and the summary way in which they took action showed that the reforms they intended to initiate were to be most thorough. The first step taken was to disband the whole of the old brigade, the Superintendent (Mr. R. Moore) and the firemen being only retained until it was definitely decided what form the alterations should assume. They next determined to seek for a new Superintendent, the result of advertisements in all the colonies being that Mr. H. E. Salter, of the Metropolitan Brigade of Sydney, was elected to the command of our firemen. The testimonials produced by the new Superintendent showed that although a young man he had had a pretty wide experience in dealing with fires. From the age of 19 years he had been connected with the Head Station, East-End, and the Central Station, London, while since his arrival in the colonies he had been under Mr. W. D. Beare, the Sydney Superintendent. Mr. Salter took charge of the brigade in April last, and was at once called to report upon the existing arrangements, with the view of enabling the Board to determine whether they were not capable of perfection. He

performed this duty in a very complete manner, and the Board, recognising the practical nature of his suggestions, gave him the necessary power to carry them into effect. He has been busily engaged upon this task up to the present time, and from present appearances the new broom is sweeping very clean. Public attention is now being directed to the alterations that are being carried on, and as the subject is of considerable importance to the citizens Mr. Salter kindly agreed to give me some idea of the innovations that he has introduced into the management of his department.

THE TWO SYSTEMS.

"Well, what do you want?" said he, ushering me into his cosy office. "Will you state what you thought of the old system?" "Oh, yes," was the reply. "I condemned it directly I saw what it was. It was conducted on wrong principles. No homogeneity existed. Everything and every one was at variance, and with such a state of things the organization never could be so perfect as it should be. A different method was required. The fifteen men who then comprised the brigade received a retaining fee to hold themselves in readiness for service, and were also paid in addition for their attendance at the fires. But the important point was that these men did not give their undivided attention to the duties of firemen. They were permitted to engage in their ordinary avocations, and they thus supplied another example that a man cannot serve two masters well. The chief objection, however, was that as the men lived at their respective homes they were not available at a moment's call, and thus from the very nature of things promptitude in turning out was not secured." "That is a most important matter in dealing with such an element as fire," I interjected. "Everything. To be at work in the early stage of an outbreak often means that you easily overcome it, whereas every minute's delay adds to the difficulty of getting the flames under control. My first recommendation was that this system of retaining men engaged in business should be absolutely abolished, and that the firemen should be compelled to live at the stations entirely, so as to be ready at a moment's notice for any emergency. Other great advantages also follow from thus centralizing the work. The men, by devoting their entire attention to the duties of the brigade, can be carefully drilled, they acquire a complete knowledge of their appliances and gain confidence in one another. It is also a great advantage to the Superintendent to have them thus placed under his direct supervision. He can judge of their capabilities for different classes of work, and by constant contact with them see that they are efficient in every detail. The men certainly were paid an extra amount under the old method to induce them to learn their drill, but the Superintendent on the score of expense was not able to call them out so often as was necessary to make them thoroughly proficient. Then if blunders were committed at the fire he was censured by the public and the Press, and so between the two stools he came to the ground. With the men on the premises I can drill them as often as may seem desirable, and they can readily be taught to do everything at the word of command. These are important considerations in the control of a Fire Brigade."

THE REORGANIZATION.

"You want details of the reform. Certainly. To begin with the total strength of the brigade, under the new regime the staff will consist of the Superintendent, the Deputy Superintendent (Mr. R. Shearing), and ten firemen, who will be secured for service in South Adelaide or the city proper, while in North Adelaide three retained men under the old system have charge of the reel stationed there. Our forces, however, will be divided. We will now have two stations in the city instead of only one as was formerly the case. No. 1, or the

head-station, being here in Flinders street, and No. 2, under the charge of the Deputy Superintendent, in Morphett-street, between Hindley-street and Light-square. Six men and myself are stationed here, while the Deputy has four men under his control at the other end of the town. The two stations and the North Adelaide Station (which is on the premises of Mr. W. Boyce, at the corner of O'Connell and Tynte streets) are all in central positions, and are connected by telephone with each other, with the Police Station, and the Exchange, so that ample means of communication are provided. An innovation will be the stationing of firemen, for night duty only, with hand-reels at the City Watchhouse and at a place to be decided upon in the eastern end of Rundle-street. They can also be rung up by telephone, and are so placed as to be ready for a call at any hour of the night." "Do you intend to encourage the Volunteer Fire Brigades," I enquired. "Yes, the Volunteer Brigades of Hindmarsh and Norwood have been recognized by the Board, and are applying to be connected by telephone with this station. If they run into a fire and offer their assistance it will be gladly accepted; in fact, everything will be done to stimulate a friendly feeling between them and the regular men. I am bound to attend fires in the suburbs if called upon to do so, although a discretionary power is given me as to distance. It would not do to go to far away and leave the city unprotected. If I went, however, I should assume complete command." "Are there any other innovations?" was my next question. "The Board, at my suggestion, intend erecting alarm-posts in different parts of the city, at which, by means of electric bells, notice of fire can be given either by the policeman on the beat or an ordinary passer-by. An indicator in the watch-room here will show the locality of the post, and within two minutes after the alarm has been sounded the men will be on their way to the outbreak." "What about the personnel of the men?" They are all single, and have to reside entirely upon the premises, being allowed leave at certain intervals, with the understanding that if they notice a fire they are at once to get ready for active service. All of them have had to pass a very strict medical examination; they are all up to a certain standard of chest measurement, and they have also been selected with a view to general ability. In the whole brigade we now have only two men who have not had previous experience in the work, and they are being rigorously drilled, so that they may become thoroughly efficient. Our Deputy, Mr. Shearing, has also had a long experience in the Metropolitan Brigade, London, and is well fitted to assume the responsibilities of his position. But you must not expect in a small city like Adelaide that we will be able to introduce the splendid improvements that have made the London Brigade so famous; still I hope that the changes I have effected will enable us to cope with any fire which may break out here."

ACTIVE WORK.

"What would you do if you were rung up now?" was the next question. "Immediately notice was given, either from an alarm post or by call, the watchman on duty, by means of a simple arrangement, rings all the men out while he is attending to the telephone. He then rushes out and harnesses the horse, and by the time it is in the reel the men in full uniform are ready to start, the whole operation not taking two minutes. The uniforms are kept hanging up in the watchroom ready for use, with the men's boots under them, while the harness is placed on convenient pegs alongside the horse, so that it can be fastened on with the greatest possible rapidity. At the fire the Superintendent, or in his absence, the Deputy Superintendent, would give orders as to what appliances should be used, how the fire should be attacked, and how the men should be stationed. With regard to the appliances, they are all in good order. The reels have been carefully overhauled, and all the hose has

been tested to a certain pressure per square inch. If any of it showed signs of weakness it was laid aside, and fresh supplies are now on the way from England to fill up the gap thus caused in the total length."

THE APPLIANCES.

"The appliances consist of four horsereels, two of which are stationed at either metropolitan station, a handreel at North Adelaide, and others under the charge of the night-watchmen at the watchhouse and at Rundle-street. So far either station has only one horse, and no doubt it would be desirable as the city increases in size to have a horse to each reel, so that all the reels may be taken to the scene of action with the greatest promptitude. My system of working is easily described. If either station were called to a fire the other station would also immediately be turned out by telephone. If the fire was found to be a large one the horses would at once be sent back for the other reels, making an available total of four horsereels and two handreels for use at the outbreak. If we still needed further assistance then the North Adelaide and the suburban reels could be ordered in. If, on the other hand, we received notice from North Adelaide of a fire there the Morphett-street reel could be at work there in five minutes from the time they receive the order to turn out."

A TURN-OUT.

"Now, I think I have told you everything," said Mr. Salter, " but before you go you had better see a turn-out. The opportunity is a good one, as the men are all in their private clothes knocking about the yard." He then conducted me to the watchhouse at the back yard, and called to the two men on duty—"An alarm from No. 2 Station." Immediately all was in a hurry and bustle. One man rushed to the wall, where he dashed on his coat, helmet, and boots almost as soon as his comrade had rung the bells which gave the alarm to the men in their bedroom. He then darted off to the stable to harness the horse, while in the meantime, undressing themselves as they came, in scrambled the rest of the men to don their uniforms. By the time they were clothed the horse was harnessed in the reel, and all were ready to mount in less than two minutes. "Pretty smart work," was my only comment. The watchroom is a large apartment, and is fitted up with telephones and a simple apparatus which enables the watchman to ring up the rest of the firemen while he is receiving the call through the instrument. The men's uniforms are also kept here ready for use. It is intended to refit the present staff, and the colour of the dress will then be changed from scarlet to dark-blue, the latter tint having been found to be more serviceable than the brighter material. The men do their own cooking, and perform that duty in turns, but their messroom is so limited in extent that it hardly deserves the dignity of the name. The two bedrooms are large and well ventilated. The reels are housed in a commodious shed at the back of the men's sleeping-rooms, the horse being stalled close to them, so that it can be harnessed into them with the greatest ease and promptitude. The final improvement shown me was an ingenious contrivance for opening the outer gates so as to allow of the exit of the reel. Heavy weights which more than balance the gates are suspended from them, and a long cord is carried from the bolt into the watchhouse. The gates are always kept fastened, but on the alarm being given the watchman pulls the cord, the bolt is withdrawn, the weights pull back the gates, and everything is ready for the reel to start. The alterations effected are certainly in the right direction, and if Mr. Salter's expectations are realized Adelaide should have a fire brigade well worthy of the name.

South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Thursday 16 July 1885, page 6

FIRE BRIGADES BOARD.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 8.

Present—Messrs. W. Cavenagh (chairman), E.M. Ashwin, R.O. Fox, Theo. Hack, F. W. Gardiner, C.L. Meyer, and H. Y Sparks. Accounts amounting to £302 18s. 11d. were passed for payment. The Secretary reported that the expenditure for the quarter ended June 30 would be about £820, making the total for the half-year about £1,325 ; that three men had been engaged for the North Adelaide reel in accordance with minute, and that the printed statutory declaration forms had been forwarded to each of the insurance companies for the purpose of ascertaining the amount of annual premium receipts to June 30. Mr. Hack reported that Mr. Cargeeg's tender for the improvements at the head station had been accepted and the contract for same duly signed, and that the work was being proceeded with. The secretary of the Mount Gambler Local Fire Brigade Board wrote, stating that on examination it had been found that the couplings supplied by the superintendent were the correct size, the standpipe also would be required, and expressing regret that the misunderstanding had arisen ; also forwarding a request for a further supply of 200 feet of hose. To be referred to the superintendent. A letter was received from the Commissioner of Crown Lands, stating that the request that the printing of the board might be done by the Government printer free of cost could not be complied with. Messrs. Colton & Co. forwarded a sample of the Harkness hand fire destroyer ; referred to the superintendent. Fire occurrence report was received from the local fire brigades board. Port Augusta, giving particulars of fire at Messrs. Young & Gordon's on June 3. A communication was received from the secretary of the local fire brigade board, Port Augusta, with regard to payment of account for fire on May 6 ; to be paid in accordance with agreement. The same board requested information as to the reappointment of firemen, and for-warded cheque value £2 1s. in payment of their proportion of plant supplied ; to be informed that the board are about to attend to the requirements of the local brigades. The secretary of the Port Pirie local brigade board for-warded an inventory of the plant in the custody of Mr. Forsaith ; the secretary to re-quest Mr. Forsaith to hand over the reel and plant to the local brigade board. Resolved that an advertisement be inserted in the daily papers giving notice that the following fire stations have been discontinued:— Rundle-street, lately known as No. 1 ; Hindley street, lately known as No. 2 ; Wellington-square, North Adelaide. The present arrangements of fire stations being as follows :—No. 1 station, Flinders-street ; No. 2 station, Morphett-street, between Hindley-street and Light-square ; No. 3 station, corner of O'Connell and Tynte-streets, North Adelaide.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Tuesday 21 July 1885, page 4

Fire Brigade Benefit Club. — At a meeting of firemen held at the Head Station on Monday, at which the Superintendent, the Deputy-Superintendent, and all the fire-men were present, a club called the Adelaide Fire Brigade Benefit Club, was formed. Mr. Salter was elected President, Mr. Taylor Secretary, and Mr. Shearing Treasurer. The objects of the club are to provide recreation for members of the brigade, to form a library, and to assist members disabled by accident. The club is to be restricted to members of the brigade, the entrance-fee and rate of subscription were fixed, including those for the admission of honorary members.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Friday 9 October 1885, page 4

FIRE BRIGADES BOARD.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30.

Present—Messrs. W. Cavenagh (Chairman), E. M. Ashwin, R. O. Fox, Theo. Hack, F. W. Gardiner, C. L. Meyer, H. Y. Sparks, and W. B. Wilkinson (Secretary). Accounts amounting to £173 4s, 11d, were passed for payment. The Secretary of the Fire Brigade, Kapunda, wrote requesting to be supplied with 300 feet of hose in accordance with the Superintendent's report, and asking if the Board deemed it advisable to have a fire alarm-bell on the telephone principally for the purpose of calling the firemen together quickly. The Superintendent to supply hose. Fire alarm-bell not considered necessary. A requisition was received from the Fire Brigade, Port Pirie, for 150 feet of hose with branch and nozzle. The Superintendent to carry out the suggestions contained in his report on the Port Pirie Brigade. The Superintendent's report on the fire at P. LeCornu's, North Adelaide, was received, and considered satisfactory. The Superintendent's report on the request of the City Coroner respecting the turning over of the debris after a fire was received. The Coroner to be informed that when he requires debris removed, and would consult the Superintendent, the latter will, when practicable, assist him, not otherwise. It was resolved—" That the Superintendent's recommendation to temporarily station a fireman at the York Hotel at night be approved, and that the Superintendent make arrangements for a temporary telephone

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Monday 19 October 1885, page 2

GENERAL NEWS.

The Adelaide Fire Brigade have notified that a fireman, with hose-cart and appliances, will be stationed at the Adelaide Arcade every day from 8 p.m. till 7 a.m.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Friday 23 October 1885, page 4

Fire at the Bank of Australasia.— Considerable excitement was caused in this city on Thursday afternoon, when smoke was seen to be issuing from the roof of the Bank of Australasia, King William-street, a report being circulated that the Bank was on fire. The report proved to be without foundation, but a small fire was ascertained to be in the lookout on the top of the roof, which fortunately, however, was discovered early and extinguished before any damage was done. The alarm was first given by Police-constable Avery, who was on duty in King William-street, at 4.25 p.m., and he rushed upstairs with Mr. Coombes, who is employed in the Bank. They found the fire in the lookout on top of the roof, and there fortunately being a tank full of water a few feet away, they were, with the assistance of some spectators, enabled to keep the flames in check till the reel arrived. The fire was then soon extinguished, it being confined only to the lookout. When first seen by Mr. Coombes the roof and floor were both in a blaze, and in his opinion the fire originated on the floor. It may be mentioned that for the past two months the southern portion of the Bank, in which the fire occurred, has been uninhabited, the banking business being conducted in the part adjoining the Old Exchange. It was intended shortly to pull the whole building down, with a view of erecting a new one, and the gas and water pipes from the Manager's residence had all been disconnected. The origin of the fire is a mystery, as no one was working on the premises, the plumbers having completed their work on the Monday night. It is fortunate that it did not occur at night time, as the inaccessible position of the building would have

rendered it very difficult to have got the fire under. The premises are insured in the Liverpool, London, and Globe Insurance Company for £5,000.

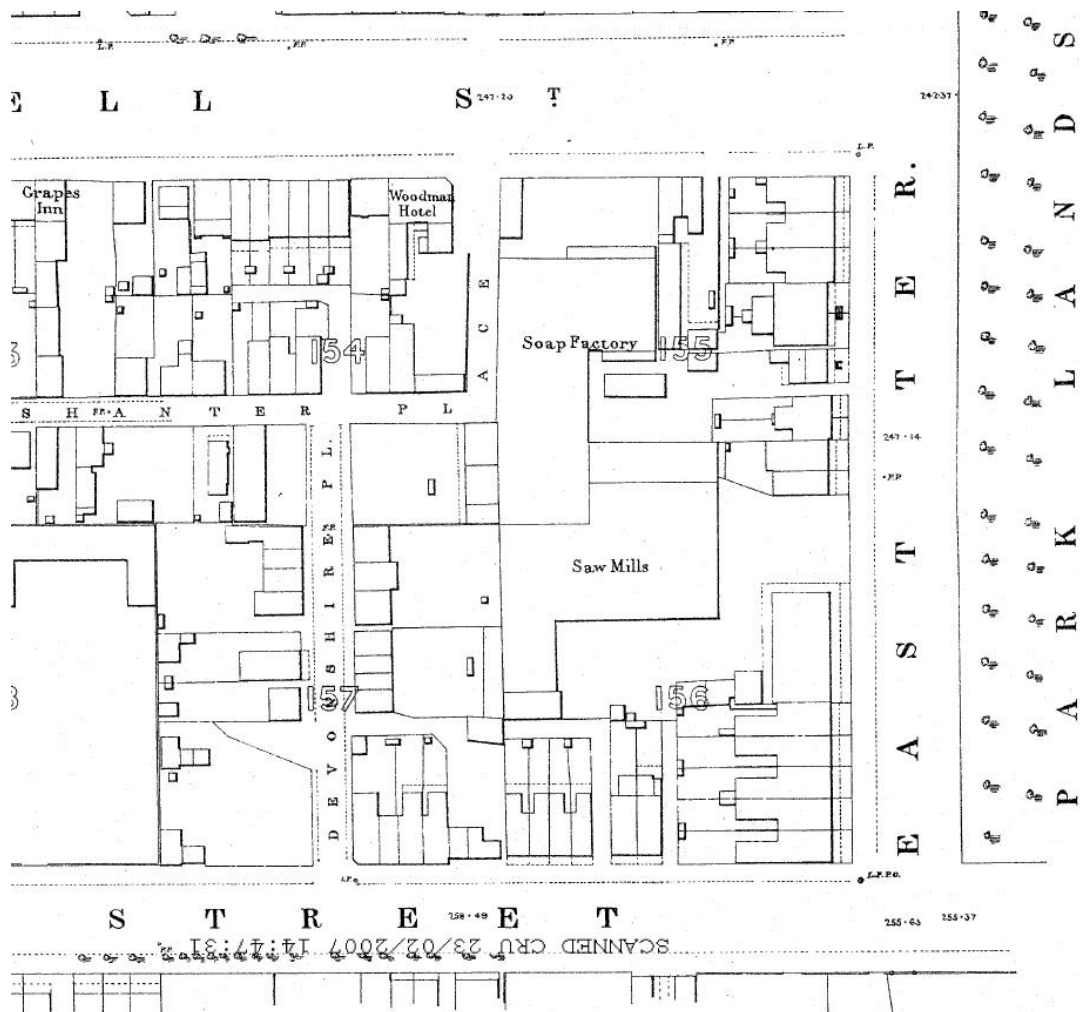
Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Monday 14 December 1885, page 2

Latest News

FIRES.—On Saturday night about quarter to 12 a fire was noticed by the police-constable on duty in Vandome's shop, 4, Rundle-street. The alarm was given, and the fire reels and a strong body of foot and mounted police were soon on the spot. The fire was got under in a few minutes, before much damage had been done, Mr. Vandome informs us that all customers' goods are safe. An inquest will be held on Tuesday morning.

Wednesday 16th December. Fire in the East End., Adelaide

A large fire at Mr. Thomas Coombe's Saw Mills, and Messrs. Burford & Co., Soap Factory.



1880 Smiths Survey, South Adelaide Sheet 61

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Thursday 17 December 1885, page 3

A Large Fire.

Last night witnessed the first great fire of the season, which for spectacular effect was one of the most magnificent ever beheld in Adelaide. Originating on the premises of Mr. Thomas

Coombe, timber merchant, on East-terrace, it soon made its way to the adjoining premises of Messrs. Burford & Co., and here the fiery element found food to its taste, and made the yard and stores the centre of operations, from which it sent forth streams of boiling and flaming resin which carried destruction wherever they flowed. Roughly speaking, it may be said that the houses facing Pirie-street, eastward of Mr. Coombe's premises, and those on East-terrace facing the park lands from Pirie-street to Grenfell-street, formed an out-side boundary behind which the fire raged, and got such a complete hold of the large quantities of inflammable material that it was manifest at an early moment that the only end of the fire in that particular locality would be when it had burned itself out. It is too soon to speak with any confidence as to the financial loss represented by the fire, but it must certainly be very large. One question was in many mouths during the progress of the fire, as again and again the flames, after subsiding for a moment, leapt up in fresh brilliance when fed by some new accession of the superabundant combustible, and that question was, "How comes it to pass that a store of highly inflammable matter, sufficient to spread devastation in a dozen cities if once ignited, is allowed to be kept in the midst of a populous neighborhood, as if for the very purpose of making the extinction of a fire once started impossible?" This is a question that we will leave to be asked at more leisure; and, though it is late to lock the stable door when the steed is gone, the answer to the question we have suggested ought not to be a mere verbal one, but a practical reform for the future. When such an amount of property as was yesterday consumed is at stake, and human life might be sacrificed to a dreadful extent, there would surely be no great hardship in requiring that such stores of combustibles should only be kept in localities where they would be beyond the possibility of doing such damage all around. Had the fire started in the night instead of at about 5 o'clock in the afternoon no one can tell how much more serious the consequences might have been. So far as can be judged by what was seen from various points of vantage the firemen did their work pluckily and well. Here and there a couple of them might have been seen perched on a wall or other elevation, from which they could direct effectively a stream of water from the hose, but which, besides being a good deal more warm than comfortable, was dangerous enough to have scared any but brave men. During a great part of the evening, their work was directed exclusively towards preventing the spread of the conflagration beyond the bounds where it had got a firm hold, and in this they were tolerably successful. The wind favored the fire very greatly, and but for the space supplied by Grenfell-street, on which there was nothing that the fire could feed, the spread of it in such circumstances must have been much greater than it was. Of course the excessively dry and hot weather we have had made everything about as inflammable as it could be, and facilitated the progress of the destroying element. The wind subsided somewhat as the night advanced, and the chances of any further spread of the fire decreased, though even at the time of writing it is quite possible that a change in the wind might result in the conflagration taking a new direction, and giving those who are battling with it enough to do.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Thursday 17 December 1885, page 3

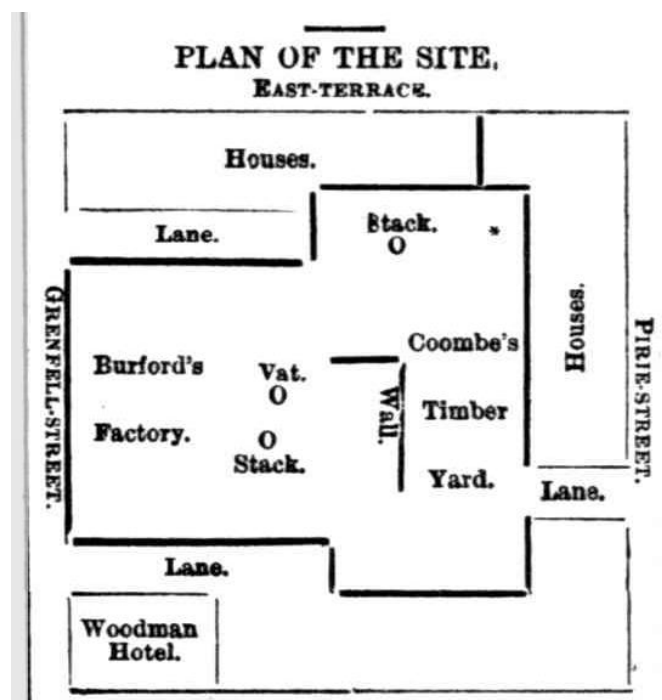
DISASTROUS FIRE.

TWENTY THOUSAND POUNDS DAMAGE.

For many months past Adelaide has not been startled by any extensive fires such as kept the whole community in a state of alarm somewhat more than a year ago. People were consequently beginning to experience a revival of confidence, and the panic which so

seriously depreciated insurance stock had greatly diminished. At half-past 5 o'clock on Wednesday evening, however—as business folk, at the close of an intensely hot day, were leaving town for their homes in the suburbs—a great mass of smoke shot suddenly upwards from the eastern end of Pirie-street. In a few minutes immense wreaths of flames mingled with the smoke, which momentarily grew denser. The alarm of fire was given, and long before 6 o'clock the city brigades were upon the scene, and every avenue leading to it from the more thickly settled streets was crammed with vehicles dashing along at headlong speed, and with excited pedestrians hurrying down to witness the promised sensation. The crowd was composed of many thousands of all sorts and conditions of colonists. They had their reward in an extraordinary spectacle, ever changing in its aspects. At half-past 5 the fire started near a stable at the south-western corner of Messrs. Coombe and Co. 's timber-yard. At 6 o'clock it had gained a mastery over the adjoining extensive premises of Messrs. Burford & Sons, tallow-chandlers, soapmakers, and wood merchants. A little later it appeared doubtful whether the high, shifting, gusty wind would not extend the limit of the flames to a large block of valuable places eastward and westward. At 9 o'clock the firemen, who worked indefatigably and incurred great risk, had the fire well under control, though from then till now they found it necessary to watch it closely and continually force water upon it. It is impossible yet to get an exact estimate of the damage done, but it may roughly be stated at £20,000 at least. Beyond this a number of the humbler sort of householders are made homeless, and a good many men are deprived of employment. As is usual in these cases, a mystery surrounds the cause of the fire. A sensational rumour flew about in Adelaide earlier in the day (and was even mentioned at a meeting of insurance agents) to the effect that the police had received an anonymous letter warning them that upon that evening the most disastrous conflagration ever known in Adelaide would be witnessed. No such letter was, however, received; no one is suspected of having caused the fire; and no one has even ventured to furnish any plausible theory relative to its origin.

PLAN OF THE SITE,



EXPLANATION OF THE PLAN. The plan given above will explain the scene of the fire, which, speaking roughly, was confined to three or four acres between East-terrace and a little stretch of the eastern ends of Pirie-street and Grenfell-street. The whole of the houses in East-terrace from Grenfell-street to Pirie-street, with the exception of the three cottages owned by Mr. Bonython (Messrs. Bonython & Sons, builders, &c.), together with the two double-story houses round the corner in Pirie-street, are the property of Mr. Clausen, are valued at about £27,000, and are not injured to any great extent by the fire. The frontages to Pirie-street not having been appreciably damaged either need not be further described. It is not a little singular, too, that no buildings abutting upon any of the main thoroughfares were burnt. The fire wrecked everything upon an intermediate area represented by the irregular square in the plan. The Grenfell-street frontage extended from East-terrace back to the end of Tam o' Shanter-street, about midway between the terrace and Hindmarsh-square. A lane runs from Grenfell-street about halfway along the block between that street and Pirie-street. Tam o' Shanter-street extends easterly for some distance, where it is almost broken in two by Devonshire-place. The Grenfell-street frontage is occupied by the Woodman Hotel, kept by Mr. Daly, and belonging to W. K. Simms & Co.—a two-storied place with a considerable frontage, and divided from Burford's factory and firewood yard by a narrow lane. The next is the iron-fenced yard, filled with wood, belonging to Burford & Co.: then three little cottages occupied respectively by a labourer and two laundresses. Beyond the Woodman are some extremely valuable properties, comprising the extensive stables of Hill & Co., a timber-yard known as Pulsford's, and at the corner of Grenfell-street and Pulteney-street is the Hindmarsh-square Church. Nearly opposite to this is the site of one of the most serious fires that have ever occurred in Adelaide, and which destroyed Pulsford's timber-yard about eighteen months ago. The western boundary of the block is occupied by, amongst other buildings, Barlow & Sons' large coach factory and the hotel. These places are mentioned because at one time when the wind changed and blew strongly from the eastward there was great danger of the fire extending to Pulteney-street and taking the whole block. The Pirie-street frontage, which was fortunately on the weather side of the fire, is taken, by rows of cottages and other buildings up to Pulteney-street, the corner of which is occupied by the Marquis of Lorne Hotel. The asterisk indicates where the fire is supposed to have started, and the black lines mark the area over which it extended. Coombe's yard is 200 feet deep from East-terrace. Mr. James Coombe occupies the house abutting on the yard, and behind which the fire began. Mr. Clausen formerly owned the timber-yard, but sold it on lease to Mr. Coombe. Burford's was divided from Coombe's by a gable wall—marked on the plan—30 feet high. This wall was put up to divide the timber-yard about twelve months ago for greater safety, under instructions from the Insurance Companies. Burford's place is an acre deep in one part and 130 feet deep in another, with a frontage to Grenfell-street of 127 feet. The block of little cottages, three facing Grenfell-street and the rest facing a lane running at right angles to it, are the property of the Messrs. Burford, as also two other cottages in Tam o' Shanter-street. These are all destroyed with the exception of those fronting Grenfell-street, which escaped total destruction in a way which was really wonderful.

THE FIRE.

It was providential that the fire should have broken out in broad daylight, as it did not take people so much at a disadvantage as if it had occurred in the dead of night. It was a noticeable fact that although the flames mounted upwards with appalling fierceness, they

did not make so much noise as when a block of buildings are being consumed. The heat was intense, speedily rendering brick and stone walls bearing the brunt of the blaze red hot. Fed as it was by the most inflammable materials, such as seasoned timber, pine boards, and, above all, the comparatively large stock of pitch, resin, and tallow, it seemed impossible for the firemen to make head against its impetuous course as it swept over the doomed property. The water poured upon certain parts of the burning mass was literally turned into steam by the heat before reaching the heart of it. From every point the spectator saw a perfect lake of hissing flames, for the timber stacks speedily fell, and the fire spread over every part of the ground. Now and then the heavy black volume of smoke would become denser and heavier as casks of resin or tallow burst, and the vapour by its very weight seemed to smother the flames like a pall; but the strength of the fire speedily overcame such temporary resistance, and rose again, often shooting a huge wedge of flame high in the air. The scene was one of great grandeur. Some of the spectators, in their eagerness to get a good view, clambered upon the sheds, walls, and fences, frequently running serious risks in their heedless excitement. More than once the alarm was given that the big chimney-stack in the middle of Coombe's yard was about to fall, and a stampede to safer quarters took place, but the stack stood firm. Very soon after the alarm was given the first of the brigades was at the fire. The fire, it is said, was first seen by two or three people near the corner in Pirie-street. Work was finished at Coombe's at about 5 o'clock, and the place was locked up shortly afterwards. They do not keep a watchman, and no one was left on the premises. The day's work at Burford's does not end till 6 o'clock, so that their hands were about the factory when, at half-past 5, the fire, it is said, was first seen in East-terrace by Mr. Hancock, who lives in the first house on the terrace, north of the yard. From a puff of smoke at first it grew into a great body of flame almost instantly. With creditable speed the pioneers of the body of firemen arrived, their suburban co-workers coming up one by one in fair time, and all co-operating very heartily and concertedly. The hose was first turned into the heart of the fire, and the full effort was directed towards preventing its spread in the direction whither the wind was blowing. The situation of the properties caused a blast to blow right upon the most inflammable materials, and the scope of the burning area increased to its fullest limit in a very few minutes. In its earliest stage the most sensational incidents occurred. First a great roof, covering a large quantity of timber, fell in with a tremendous crash. The displacement of this erection made a way for the firemen. By this time Mr. Coombe's kitchen and the outhouses of some of the adjoining properties facing East-terrace were blazing, but no very serious damage was done here. The fire then flew at once towards Burford's and Devonshire-place opposite the National Hotel. Here the panic-stricken residents were rushing to and fro fully convinced— and there was ample warrant for their fear— that there was no hope of saving their premises. Furniture was hurled out of the houses and strewn upon the road, but happily the flames did not extend so far westward. There is a T-end to the street which led to the factory. At the end, but a little south, and at the rear of the Devonshire frontages were two cottages which were occupied by employes of Mr. Burford. William Cook, the groom, lived in one of these, and lost all his goods and chattels, which he valued at £30. He only the other day purchased a watch and clock, which cost him £15, and both of these were destroyed. He only had five minutes to clear out of his house, so was not given an opportunity of recovering any goods. The factory stables were situated between his house and Devonshire-place, and there were two horses feeding in them at the time. Fortunately they were removed without harm. Thomas Roach, a soapboiler employed at the Sturt-street establishment, who was the occupant of the other house, shared a similar fate

with his companion employé. Everything he possessed was burnt. The wind was at this period blowing a regular gale direct from the southeast. The middle of the mantle of fire had been flung by the wind completely over Burford's premises, and its outer edge reached to the Woodman Hotel. The destruction of this place and its attached houses seemed almost inevitable, as they were right in the course of the wind. The gloomy prospect, of course, produced great consternation among the neighbouring householders to the north-west, and almost every article of furniture was removed to the streets by them, many cherished household gods to be trodden to pieces by the swaying crowd. At the T end of Devonshire-lane a hose from the head station was playing on the burning mass, but the effect was hardly noticeable. The pressure appeared to be weak, owing to the number of deliveries, and one or two hoses burst. The fire touched the windows of the hotel at about half-past 6, but went no further, though the windows were shattered and the walls were so hot as to scorch one's hand. The firemen, assisted by willing volunteers, were chiefly called upon to devote themselves to the centre of Burford's block, which at 7 o'clock was covered by fire. The only distinctive features of the mass were the chimneystacks respectively of Coombe's and Burford's, the central two-angled wall, the tall steam woodchopper with its engine and shafting, and a huge wrought-iron soap and fat cauldron. Burford's stock consisted chiefly of resin, candles, tallow, soap, firewood, and coal. These emitted suffocating clouds of smoke, which seriously interfered with the duties of the firemen. Much alarm was occasioned by the streams of boiling resin and tallow which flowed in one torrent down the watertable in Grenfell-street and in another down a drain into East-terrace, finally finding their way into the Park Lands. In Grenfell-street the blazing stuff had overflowed, and spread for many yards along the street. The hose was played upon it, extinguishing the fire. The resinous stream soon hardened slightly. Whilst it was in this state one man incautiously stepped into the deceptive mass and slipping sat down in about 3 inches of it. He extricated himself, but was in a most unenviable plight, as he had in his efforts to get out smothered himself all over with a coat of pitch, and only wanted a supply of feathers to complete his costume. The culvert at the terrace at one time ran full of mingled resin and soap, and the crowd were at this time diverted at the sight of an unfortunate cat half-blinded and in terrible agony crawling out of the gutter. Several fowls were roasted to death in their house at the back of one of the cottages, and some were parboiled in the seething gutters; but a few escaped or were rescued by their owners at the risk of life. The firemen dashed carelessly through the blazing matter, which extended at one place to the tramrails in the middle of Grenfell-street, near the Woodman Hotel. Here a telephone pole had its foot in the centre of the fluid, and the fire ran along it, making the wire red hot, and placing in jeopardy those who stood beneath it. A new danger to the houses facing East-terrace arose in the presence of a stream of melted fat and soap coursing along the centre of the small yards at their back. This flowed chiefly from the cauldron which was now (at about 8 o'clock) the centre of the fire, and which was rent in several places by the fierceness of the heat. Its oily contents poured in a blazing stream through the centre of the yard, and so out into the street. Almost as soon as the fire began in Coombe's attempts were made to clear the resin out of Burford's premises. Mr. Fred Wright, of the Victoria Insurance Company, and others led on a salvage party, but the fire overtook them when they had rolled a few barrels across Grenfell-street. Their presence there was a source of danger when later the burning lava-like stream threatened to spread over the road. The precaution was taken of thoroughly saturating the buildings opposite to the main part of the fire. There being only a fence facing Grenfell-street, besides the little cottages next to East-terrace, there was comparatively little danger to be apprehended in

that quarter, though several times a false alarm was raised that the tall chimney-stack was toppling. The firemen now worked towards the east, at the rear of the terrace houses, separated by a very narrow right-of-way from Burford's yard. On East-terrace, after crossing a lane adjoining Mr. Coombe's residence and an enclosed space on which timber was stacked, is the residence of Mr. Hancock, who was one of the first to raise the alarm. Silurian-place comprises two small cottages, one of which is occupied by Mrs. Lee, and the other is vacant, the tenant having left the same morning. Almost attached to this is the residence of Mr. G. L. Bonython, who is absent in Tasmania, and two more cottages, which have for tenants Mr. Briggs and Mrs. Mullen. Mr. Bonython has a carpenter's shop at the rear of his house, which with effects was completely destroyed, and it was from this source the greatest danger was at one time threatened. The flames quickly despoiled the shop and would certainly have attacked the row of houses had it not been for the plucky efforts of some of the bystanders who volunteered their services and commenced with a will to pull down the connecting fences. Had the wind veered for a minute nothing could have saved the fire from destroying the whole block. All the houses were promptly cleared of the furniture which they contained. There is but little doubt that many articles will be missed when a search is made, or if not missed will be so injured as to be almost useless. In this way many of the persons will be severe sufferers, and in some instances they can ill afford to bear their losses. Mr. Lissen, who occupies the last house of the block, was also compelled to shift. Two other dwellings ; which completed the whole of that portion of the street, were uninhabited. We understand that Mr. Bonython's loss is about £700, and that he is only partly insured. By about 9 o'clock the fire had about done its worst. Almost everything inflammable on the properties of Messrs. Coombe and Burford had either been reduced to ashes or was in rapid process of combustion. There was nothing to be saved; all the firemen could do was to let the fire burn itself out and prevent its spread to the adjacent buildings. The greatest danger, after the first hour was on the eastward. At an earlier stage the dangerous stream of resin from Burford's factory was in some places as much as 2 feet deep, flowing between Grenfell-street and the gate leading from East-terrace into Coombe's timber-yard. At the entrance to the timber-yard a large quantity of timber was stacked, and attached to Mr. Coombe's residence was an outbuilding which ran out well into the locality of the fire. These were sources of danger. So long as the wind was blowing to the south they were safe, as the flames were carried away from them. But as the evening advanced the strong breeze became variable, changing to the south-east, and occasionally to due east. Then the clouds of smoke would sweep across East-terrace to the discomfiture of the large crowds of persons assembled there, and the flames would turn in the direction of Mr. Clausen's property. This was the cause of some excitement and alarm. It was feared that a high wind would despite the energy of the firemen spread the fire to this block of buildings. Fortunately it chopped round again, and the threatened further catastrophe avoided, During the whole of this time the firemen were scattered about amidst the burning debris, pouring water on to the fire wherever it displayed signs of vitality. They had an arduous task. The smoke enveloped them in so thick a cloud that for a while they could not see or be seen. They were throughout assisted by a large number of volunteers, men with their coats and waistcoats off, and their sleeves turned up to the elbow, who were ready for any work required from them. They helped to drag along the hose, to remove inflammable material to places of safety, and where they could do nothing else to throw water on dangerous patches of fire with buckets. At 10 o'clock the fire in this quarter was beginning to show signs of waning power, and Mr. Clausen's property was safe. The damage done to it was slight, but it

certainly had a very narrow escape from total destruction. It was insured. The fire raged up to a late hour, but the fiercest part was confined to the soap-caldron, and consequently the firemen needed not to trouble about that. By midnight the spectators had diminished considerably, and each half-hour subsequently still further reduced the number until a few only remained.

THE INSURANCES.

The particulars as to the insurance policies are as follows:—Policy 30,375, due January 22, 1886, Burford & Sons, £654, retained by the South Australian Company, viz.:—Stable, £200; eight horses, £160; six drays, £120; twelve sets harness, £54; and four traps, £120. Policy 30,376, due January 22, Burford and Sons, £450, retained by South Australian Company, viz.:—£200 on coopers' shop ; £200 on pitch, tallow, &c.; and £50 on tools. Policy 30,377, due January 22, Burford and Sons, £326, retained by South Australian Company, viz.:—Three dwellings and four offices, £300; furniture in offices, £26. Policy 37,029, due June 30 next, Australian Mutual Provident Society, re Coombe, £500, with £500 retained by the South Australian Company, viz. :—Timber-shed, £700; stables, £100 ; and timber-shed, £200. Policy 37,141, due January 22, Burford & Sons, £5,700, reinsured, and £1,000 retained by the South Australian Company. Total insurances retained by the South Australian Company, £2,900. Messrs. Burford's personal reinsurances, amounting to £5,700, are distributed as follows:—Phoenix, £1,000; Mercantile, £1,000; Equitable, £1,000; Cornwall, £1,000; Adelaide, £500; National of Australasia, £500 ; and London and Provincial, £700. The last-named policy covers a factory, £1,000; shed, £50; stock in factory, £5,000; plant and trade utensils in factory, £50; machinery in factory, £50; engine and boiler, £100 ; stock (including firewood, coal, and pitch in shed and in yard), £450. The total amount covered on the five policies is £9,130.

INTERVIEWS.

Mr. Thomas Coombe said—I am the sole proprietor of the timber-yard which has been destroyed, and have taken the premises on lease from Mr. Clausen. I left the yard shortly after 5 o'clock on Wednesday evening to catch the 5.45 p.m. train from Victoria-square to Glenelg, where I reside. Reached the station about 5.40, and heard a cry of "Fire." Looked around and saw a dense volume of smoke. Ran to the corner, when some one said—"Coombe, I believe it is your yard on fire." I took a cab and came straight down, and on my arrival the whole yard was one mass of flames. When I left the place was securely shut up, and to all appearances all right, the fires in the engine-room being out. I employ five men, all of whom left at the same time as I did. Smoking is prohibited upon the premises, and as far as I am aware the hands do not smoke there. The cause of the fire is a complete mystery to me. I suspect no one, nor do I know of any one who bears me any ill-feeling. I believe the stock is insured for £5,000 in various Companies, but do not know their names. Stock was last taken on October 1. I value it at between £4,000 and £5,000— perhaps more—but owing to the arrangements the Insurance Companies have made as regards timber-yards I shall not get the full amount for what I am insured. Have been engaged in the present business close on two years and six months. The machinery comprised the usual machinery used in connection with the business, and included among other things a moulding machine, vertical saws, and circular saw. I keep no watchman on the premises. Mr. James Coombe, a brother of Mr. Thomas Coombe, but unconnected with the business, resides in the house referred to as adjoining the yard. He said—I was in the house the whole of the afternoon.

Was talking to another brother of mine inside when a man put his head inside the front door and called out "Fire." This was 5.30 p.m., as near as I could judge. I said to my brother, "Run out and call fire, and I will go for the horses." Went to the stable in the yard, which is situated right at the back of the house, and managed to release one horse, but the heat was so great that I was compelled to let another remain there, and she was burnt. When I was called the place was enveloped in flames right and left. After releasing the horse I returned to the office, which is attached to the house, and secured the whole of the books. The wind being in the opposite direction, however, there was not much danger of the house then catching. I have no idea how the fire originated, Mr. Benjamin Burford said—I left the premises at 5.15 and was at the other factory when I saw the fire. Reached our establishment at a quarter to 6, up to which time we were all safe. In a very short space of time the flames came rushing over our dividing wall and soon enveloped the premises. The wall was 30 feet high and divided us from the timber-yard. We were compelled to build it under instructions from the Insurance Companies some twelve months ago. We had on the premises 1,500 casks of resin, 300 of tallow, 500 of pitch tallow, and 20 tons of oil, which were all destroyed. In addition we had a large stock of soap and candles, and a considerable quantity of firewood and deals. A carpenter's shop fitted up, and engine, boiler, sawmills, &c., were also glutted. We saved the horses, and all the papers and books out of the office. The fire spread with such rapidity that it was almost an impossibility to save anything else. Mr. William Burford was at the Home for Incurables at 6 o'clock, when he first noticed the fire. He says their property is insured for £7,500, and he hopes that this will nearly cover their losses. They do not close their premises until 6 o'clock, so that their hands were engaged at work at the time of the outbreak. Walter Currell, engineer, engaged by Mr. Coombe, said he saw the fires put out himself, and left the premises at five minutes past 5. He was at his house in Parkside when he first heard of the fire. Thomas Hancock, residing on East-terrace, next door to the yard, said that he and his father were sitting at the back of their house about 5.30 p.m. There was no appearance of any fire then in the timber-yard, but he had occasion to enter the house for a minute or two, and during his absence his father raised the alarm, and he found the premises enveloped in flames. Caroline Hickmott, in the employ of Mr. James Coombe, said she went as far as Grenfell-street close on 5.30 p.m., and as she returned to the house everything appeared all safe, there being no sign whatever of fire. She had, however, only had time to take off her hat when she was alarmed by, she believes, Hancock calling out "Coombe, your place is on fire." She at once went out and noticed the yard all of a blaze, while it appeared to have started from immediately behind the house. A lad named Harris said he was coming into Pirie-street at a quarter-past 5. when he observed the fire break out in the south-western corner of the timber-yard near the stable. This does not agree with the statement of the other witnesses, though the boy is very positive as to the time. Mr. Hamilton, living in No. 4, East-terrace, saw the fire five minutes after it started, and says it broke out in two distinct places, somewhere near the engine-room in the timber-yard. Mr. Wiesemeyer, also living in No. 4 house, corroborates the remarks made by Mr. Hamilton. Mrs. Oldfield, who lives in one of the houses fronting the timber depot, saw smoke issuing from the sides and top of the depot before the flames were visible. Her son first informed her of the fact. He also saw smoke coming through the ventilators to the stable, so that it is possible that the unfortunate horse which suffered death was suffocated before undergoing the pains of burning. Mrs. Oldfield is of opinion that the fire originated somewhere near the chimney.

THE POLICE AND THE BRIGADES.

The police authorities were equal to the emergency, and the arrangements appeared to be systematic and thorough. Constables were stationed in East-terrace, Grenfell-street, Pirie-street, and in the lanes at the back of Coombe's. They behaved with firmness and judgment in keeping the crowd back, and it is but justice to the people to say that they gave little trouble. Every available member of the Police Force was sent to the scene of the fire. The troopers gave great assistance. Commissioner Peterswald, and Inspectors Hunt, Shaw, and Sullivan were present. Major Gordon tele-phoned from Port Glanville asking whether he should send some of the Permanent Force up to help in keeping order, but their services were not required, Mr. Salter, the Superintendent of the Fire Brigade, was directing the operations of the men all the time, and it was gratifying to witness the cheerful manner in which his orders were obeyed, no matter how perilous the undertaking was. They received plenty of help from volunteers, who, however, would do well to restrain their excusable ardour in most instances, because, as the experienced firemen say, they are not accustomed to such work, and are more of a nuisance than of a service. The firemen were frequently applauded for daring feats. The North Adelaide, Hindmarsh, Norwood and Kensington, St. Peters, and representatives of Harrold's and other private brigades worked hard during the evening. About eighteen deliveries were kept constantly going for the first three hours. The Metropolitan Brigade alone had eight hoses at work. Superintendent Salter speaks in terms of the highest possible praise of the manner in which the men performed their work. He also singled out several civilians to whom he alludes in the most complimentary words.

THE WATER-PRESSURE.

We learn from Mr. Colebatch, of the Waterworks Yard, Kent Town, that the pressure-gauge for water supplied read as follows during Wednesday evening:— At 5 30 it was 56 lb. to the square inch; at 7 o'clock it was 50 lb.: half an hour later 60 lb.: at 8 o'clock, 63 lb.; at 9 o'clock, 71; at 10 o'clock, 72; and at 10 30, about 72 lb. The pressure is lowest as a rule about 7 o'clock, when the inhabitants of the suburbs are watering their gardens. At that time the gauge records show that the pressure ranges from 42 lb. to 48 lb. Last evening was no exception, and it will be observed that within half an hour the pressure increased very rapidly. The body of water at Hope Valley is so great that very slight difference was made by the large supply needed for the fire-hose during the whole of the night. The average highest pressure at night is about 80 or 82 ; at 11.30 it sometimes reaches a maximum of 93 lb. Mr. Colebatch mentioned that he saw the fire burning about 6 o'clock, when only one hose was at work. He thought the pressure then was quite sufficient. He returned to the Waterworks, and shortly afterwards went to the scene of the fire again, when seven or eight hose were playing around the burning remises. The pressure then was very good, but it was hopeless to expect to do anything in the way of suppressing the outbreak, however much water could have been obtained. Mr. Colebatch thinks there was no ground whatever for complaint of want of sufficient pressure. The only thing to give additional force to the supply was to shut off the side streets, and to put the main pressure on the street where the water is being consumed; but the Waterworks authorities did not like to do this unless it was absolutely necessary, which they did not consider was the case here. It appears that during the evening several hundred feet of hose was provided from the Waterworks Yard for use at the fire, and that a turncock from the department was on the spot from 6 o'clock, so that every possible assistance was rendered by the Waterworks officials when required. In regard to the cleansing of the sewers, there are at least eighty 2-inch and 3-inch "scours" at work daily within the drainage area of Adelaide for the purpose of scouring the sewers, and the

quantity of water used at the fire will not be large enough to affect their continued use. These scours flow with the full main pressure into the sewers, so that a very large amount of water passes through them. While there is not much likelihood of the main sewers in the vicinity of the fire becoming choked with the burning resin, tar, &c., it is quite probable that these substances, being in such large quantities, will seriously injure the irrigating effects of the sewage at the places where it is utilized. The Hydraulic Engineer (Mr. Mestayer) informs us that during the past week there have been no complaints whatever of the pressure, and that the quantity used at the fire can have no appreciable effect upon the stores at Hope Valley. At present the reservoir at Thorndon Park is not wanted. Now and then, for technical reasons that cannot be explained in detail, the water is turned on from Thorndon Park. The pressure on the mains is lowest about midday, when everybody in town is requiring water and there is a heavy demand for warehouses. In the evening also, when persons were watering their gardens, the pressure was low. There is no likelihood, in his opinion, of the sewers being affected by the boiling fats and tar from the burning pre-mises.

INCIDENTS.

The Park Lands immediately opposite the site of the fire were thronged. The unfortunate occupants of cottages threatened by the flames got their goods out with little loss of time, their household belongings being in most instances unceremoniously bundled on to the footpath and damaged considerably in the transit. Draymen (if they charged in the emergency) must have reaped a harvest, as many people very naturally appeared to wish to put the greatest distance they could between the fire and their chattels. Quite a string of drays moved off loaded to deposit the articles under the trees in the Park Lands, down Bartels-road chiefly, where the owners mounted guard over them. More than half the population of Adelaide was represented, and the larrikin element, male and female, was conspicuous, but not particularly troublesome, the impressive character of the scene to some extent keeping the spirit of rowdyism down; but the presence of a strong body of mounted and foot police no doubt exercised a greater restraining force than the sentiment of the sublime. Amidst all the confusion, and while the fire was raging, a number of cricketers were coolly pursuing their game on the East Park Lands without paying the slightest attention to what was going on within so short a distance of them. As usual the poor showed for each other that kindly and neighbourly feeling which comes out so strongly on such occasions. One poor woman took the juvenile family of a burnt-out neighbour into her own little cottage and attended to their requirements with much solicitude. People who probably hardly knew whence the next meal was to come promptly gave house room to homeless families, and there were plenty of willing hands to help to remove furniture and stock from the vicinity of the flames, many helpers running serious risks in doing so. Many houses on East-terrace were emptied of their contents, and all along Grenfell-street the roadway was covered with piles of stuff of all sorts. The fire, indeed, literally drove out some of the occupants of houses on East-terrace, as in more than one case the back fences were burnt down and the doors charred. The police had much ado to restrain the excessive zeal of over-energetic injudicious helpers, who, as such enthusiasts are wont to do in such cases, pitched looking-glasses and breakable articles out of the windows, and did more damage than the flames. There was a boiler near the spot where the fire started, and as it was in the midst of the hottest part of the blaze the cry was raised that it was about to burst. This created a brief panic amongst spectators, and they hurried away from a locality so dangerous. The boiler, however, did not burst. The traffic was stopped in the lower end of

Grenfell-street, the cars going round by the York Hotel. Grenfell-street has been rendered conspicuous by two great fires, but although one of the oldest thoroughfares in the city it has enjoyed a comparative immunity. In the early days of the colony it was the main artery, as it led to the Greenhill-road, which was the main line to Strathalbyn, Mount Barker, and the Tiers. Most of the traffic came that way into Adelaide. It was regarded as one of the main streets of the town. Mr. Peacock settled in business there in the early times, and Burford & Co. entered upon a candle-manufacturing business. The Guardian and the Chronicle newspapers had their offices in that street. The name of Burford is connected with the earliest business associations there. The Woodman Hotel is also an old architectural identity, as it has existed for very many years, and is remembered by old colonists as the resort of people who came in from the back country on periodical visits to early Adelaide. Coombe's timber-yard and Burford's premises are situated in the midst of a perfect nest of houses, many of them being small cottages of a primitive type, especially those at the rear of the Woodman.

South Australian Weekly Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1881 - 1889), Saturday 19 December 1885, page 9

LARGE FIRE IN THE CITY.

COOMBE'S TIMBER-YARD BURNT, BURFORD'S SOAP FACTORY DESTROYED.

So soon as the hot weather commences the citizens of Adelaide begin to have apprehensions of outbreaks of fire, but since the capture of the individual who is supposed to have been the cause of the many fires which occurred last summer, comparative peace has reigned in the various households of the city and suburbs. It was therefore astonishing to the general body of the community when an alarm of fire was raised on Wednesday afternoon, just about the time that mercantile gentlemen had left their offices and were proceeding to their homes. A rumor had been started during the day to the effect that Commissioner Peterswald had received an anonymous communication, in which, like the celebrated epistle intercepted by Lord Mouteagle, there were hints of certain establishments being "blown up," and in view of the reception of any such interesting particulars it may well be imagined that the police would be more than ordinarily alert. It is perhaps cruel to the romantic mind to have to say that this rumor had no foundation whatever in fact. No special meeting of the various insurance companies was held ; there was no communication be-tween the Commissioner of Police and the companies ; and in fact both the companies and the police were blissfully ignorant of the intentions of any would-be incendiaries or of the likelihood that a fire was about to take place. The first warning of the presence of a conflagration was received about half-past 5 o'clock, when a dense volume of smoke, carried by a wind from the south-east, suddenly rolled over the eastern portion of the city. Even then there were no expectations of any serious disaster, and it was only when the different reels belonging to the Adelaide Fire Brigade and numerous cabs began to rush eastward that public fear began to be aroused. It was not long before a large crowd of persons assembled at the bottom of Pirie-street, whence the smoke from the fire proceeded, and all conjectures as to the nature of the fire were soon set at rest by the peculiar aroma which greeted the nostrils of those who were on sensation bent. We need not here enter into a discussion of what actually took place. Suffice it to say that the conflagration has involved a loss of at least between £15,000 and £16,000, and had it not been for providential means a very much greater loss must have taken place. The fire, it

appears, had its origin somewhere in the timber-yard of Mr. Coombe, and owing to the inflammable nature of the material there stacked the flames quickly spread to the establishment of Messrs. Burford and Sons, whose premises front Gren-fell-street. When we state that there were 1,500 barrels of resin and 1,000 casks of tallow oil stored on Messrs. Burford's factory, it may well be imagined that as the flames extended beyond the timber-yard there was great consternation. Indeed, to set aside the grandeur of the scene as it was witnessed by day, those who saw the effects produced by the burning of the oil in the immense cauldron at night will not readily obliterate the result from their remembrance. There was £300 worth of oil in the one pan, and at midnight on Wednesday the flames, which had already been fed from the same source, seemed to leap above the chimney stack in the yard, and undoubtedly lit up the eastern heavens with a glory almost surpassing that of the rising sun. Some of our correspondents assure us that for miles round the city the "pillar of fire by night" was observed with mingled curiosity and alarm. To the dwellers on the plains towards Port Adelaide it appeared as though the whole city were in a blaze, whilst the rolling masses of resinous vapor and smoke filled the residents on the hillsides with apprehensions of a conflagration even more alarming in its proportions than was actually the case. Within the limits of the city every commanding elevation was readily taken advantage of. One of the best positions was that afforded by the roof of the theatre, where by the courtesy of Mr. Flecker a party of gentlemen were permitted to observe the curious effects of light and shade produced by the dancing flames as they flashed to and fro behind the sable curtain of smoke. Too much praise cannot be awarded to the firemen, and to the police, who worked with a will throughout. The head-station reel was first on the scene, and was followed by the St. Peters reel in connection with the Norwood brigade, and by the Norwood reel itself. It would, however, be invidious to enter into particulars where all did so well. Of course all tramway traffic in Grenfell-street was completely suspended, but the cars from the eastern suburbs were taken round by the Yorke Hotel, and very little inconvenience to passengers resulted. There were one or two half ludicrous and half painful scenes with the conflagration. At one period a cat was observed on the roof of one of the cottages standing between Burford's establishment and the houses which face East-terrace. The poor animal seemed so stricken with fear that it was unable to move, and even the friendly persuasion of a large block of wood was ineffectual in hurrying it from its unenviable resting place. The cause of this reticence on the part of the cat was made manifest, as the unfortunate brute showed that it had been well nigh roasted on one side, and there was a general feeling of relief when pussy took a header from the verandah and disappeared. A fowl and a dog, the latter of a mongrel character, also had to pass the fiery ordeal, and came out minus feather and hair. It is impossible to estimate with any degree of accuracy the amount of damage done, but it is generally believed that between £15,000 and £16,000 will not cover the loss. Of this amount Mr. Coombe is insured for £5,000, while the insurances of the Messrs. Burford amount to £9,000. This risk, we understand, was taken for forty years, and the South Australian Insurance Company insisted that a brick parapet wall should be erected between the timber yard and the soap factory, the cost being something like £350. Below we give descriptions of the fire as seen from different points of view.

IN DEVONSHIRE-PLACE.

One of our reporters arrived at the spot very shortly after the fire had broken out, and on making enquiries found that the flames were first seen in the south-west corner of Coombe's timber-yard, close against the stone wall of the stable belonging to that firm, and

close on the eastern side of O'Keefe's stables. This was at about twenty-five minutes to 6 o'clock, and the flames had apparently just then broken through from the locality indicated in the timber-yard to O'Keefe's stables. The horses put up in this latter place had just been removed, and the fire was raging and throwing off such heavy dense clouds of black smoke as to predict a considerable conflagration unless checked. Devonshire-place is a narrow lane running from Pirie-street, opposite the National Hotel, to within about forty yards of Grenfell-street, with which it communicates by way of Tam O'Shanter-place a little further to the east. Just about 5.30 o'clock the reel from the head station dashed down Devonshire-place, and at once commenced to play on the spot where the fire first broke out, but the pressure of water was very slack, and the effects were absolutely nil. All the while the flames, fanned by a south-east wind blowing at about a quarter gale, were making rapid headway amongst the pine planks in the timber-yard. But the firemen were not idle. The pressure had been increased and three deliveries were put on from the south-west side. It was all of no avail, however, and the fear at once gained ground that Burford's old soap factory would soon be assailed. With considerable rapidity the flames rushed towards the north-west, and the soap factory became every moment in more imminent danger. Meanwhile all the occupants of the cottages in Devonshire-place—the O'Keefes, Chapmans, and others—were busy in bundling their furniture into the lane, where the crowd was very large. All this work was carried on under the greatest difficulties, as the heat from the flames was wafted by the wind at a slight angle to the lane. Then women and children were engaged in saving their chattels amidst a scene of the wildest excitement ensued. What with the crowd of onlookers, the householders hurrying about with furniture, the police keeping order, the firemen dashing up close to the flames, and the great rolling volumes of smoke, the scene was one to be remembered. All the efforts of the fire brigade were useless, and in about ten minutes from the alarm the flames had traversed up to the parapet wall which divided the timber yard from the soap factory. The firemen, assisted by civilians, redoubled their exertions, but to no avail. Two minutes later and the flames were seen to have caught the more southerly portions of Burford's' buildings. Immediately south of Burford's office there were three small cottages, two of which were occupied by a Mr. Cook, and so fiercely did the fire sweep through the timber-yard towards his place that he had only time to make good his escape, leaving all his effects to the value of about £50 behind. At about a quarter to 6 o'clock the fire had swept clean into the southern portion of Burford's, and as it was known that there were several thousands of barrels of tallow and resin stored there it was recognised that the conflagration had not at all reached its culmination. Soon the inflammable contents of the soap factory became fired, and the flames leapt fully 60 feet in the air amongst the columns of murky smoke. The three hoses directed from this side were as nothing, the jets of water looking like mere toys against the tremendous body of fire and flame. Not the least impression was made upon the progress of the fire. Amongst the first to notice the danger were Mr. B. Burford and one of his men, who met in Devonshire-place. Mr. Burford immediately ran to the office and secured all the books and papers, including £1,000 worth of acceptances. At 6 o'clock the flames had got into the centre of the soap factory, and as they sprang high in the air and raged terrifically, the heat 100 yards off was almost unbearable. The smoke also appeared to be doubled in volume, and at times it created a surrounding darkness like an eclipse. It was now felt that there was a possibility of the boiler bursting. It was full of water and was completely surrounded by firewood, and it was felt that as the water expanded into steam the boiler would explode. Luckily, however, this contingency did not occur. Then it was feared that Burfords' high chimney stack might

fall, but although it appeared to attain a white heat it remained intact. As soon as the flames got into Burfords' tallow and resin they began to rage fearfully, and to rush towards the Woodman Hotel, which faced Grenfell-street, and was separated by a lane some 18 feet in width. The firemen here showed great courage. Seeing that it was hopeless to save the factory, they went almost between the place and the hotel, and within about eight yards of really terrific flames and played the water on to the hotel, and also on to the burning tallow. At this time the head station reel had their three hoses throwing water on to the great body of the flames, and what with the roaring of the wind, the hissing of the water, and the absolute war of elements, the noise was well nigh deafening, and at the same time the smoke continued to curl out close to the ground in tremendous clouds, with high tongues of flame every now and then darting upward. All this while the timber in Coombe's yard continued to burn with tremendous intensity, although at that part the flames and smoke had lessened. The pine boards formed parallel lines or heaps of fire throwing off a scorching heat. But the danger here was past. With the arresting effect of one hose the fire could not make any headway towards the houses facing Devonshire-place. At one time a flying spark landed on Chapman's back balcony, and was just starting to blaze up when it was noticed and put out. Thereafter none of the properties there were in jeopardy. Now the whole fury of the flames seemed to be concentrated on the western side of Burford's, where there was evidently a large quantity of resin and tallow, and it seemed an impossibility that the Woodman Hotel could be saved. Some courageous civilians went into the upper rooms and closed up all the openings, and others removed some poultry from the back yard amidst cries of "Roast duck !" Meanwhile the firemen with one or two civilians were performing wonders in the way of trying to save the hotel. The flames reached right across the right-of-way, and lapped on to the building, but by dint of sheer hard work the members of the brigade managed to pre-vent them from getting a hold. From this out it was simply a fight between the flames and the firemen, and the latter, with a courage and persistency that deserve all praise, stuck to their work, and were rewarded with the satisfaction of saving the places and of con-fining the fire to the soap factory. Had it once crossed the narrow lane to the Woodman there is no doubt the whole block of buildings running along Grenfell-street to the west would have been devastated. It was nearly 9 o'clock before all danger seemed to be overcome, and from that out on the western side of the fire it was simply a question of careful watching. But many of the people were afraid to re-enter their houses, and the general consternation was maintained far into the night.

IN GRENFELL STREET.

Those persons who congregated at the bottom of Rundle-street were sufficiently rewarded for their pains, so far as the grandeur of the scene was concerned. The fierce crack-ling of the flames, the hoarse cries of the fire-men, and the encouraging shouts of the mob, which at no period could have been less than two or three thousand strong, must have provided all the excitement that a person of the most sensational temperament could have desired. Before the flames had well left the vicinity of Coombe's timber yard the proprietors of the cottages adjoining had removed their worldly goods, so that but mere bricks and mortar remained for the devouring element. Furniture was bundled out in the most promiscuous way, and, as may be imagined, was not improved in appearance despite the willingness of all who were concerned in the removal. Black clouds of smoke were driven across the street, and ever and anon lurid sheets of flame lit up the heavens, giving promise of even more dreadful results to come. "My word," said a small boy who appeared to know all about it, "if

it catches the resin won't there be a blaze !" By this time it was evident that there would be no possible chance of saving Burford's establishment, for the hungry flames leapt along as though un-willing to be deprived of their prey, and a loud shout soon betokened that the soap and candle factory was ablaze. From this out the scene became most imposing. The large chimney in Messrs. Burford's establishment was perfectly surrounded by fire, and the efforts of the firemen to cope with the conflagration seemed feeble indeed, as they might well be under the circumstances. The wind at this time was blowing due south-east, and many were the apprehensions that considerably more buildings would be fired. Each fresh gust sent the flames careering along in the direction of the Woodman Hotel, and but for the prompt efforts of the firemen there can be no doubt that this structure must have been sacrificed. There was a peculiar hiss as the fire licked up the material before it that told of the inflammable nature of the stuff that was met with. At about ten minutes after 6 o'clock the flames caught one of the houses facing Grenfell-street, and those who were in the roadway were driven back several paces by the fierce heat. Then it was seen that the flames were driving right along the division between the houses on East-terrace and Burford's factory. The firemen in Grenfell-street were now doing gallant work, but despite their efforts there seemed to the onlookers to be little or nothing accomplished, and even the men, dauntless as they undoubtedly showed themselves to be, had to retire for a while. The remark of the small boy above alluded to was soon seen to possess peculiar point, for in a very few moments there was a roar and blaze, which showed that some more than usually good fuel had been reached. The crowd drew back. Thick volumes of smoke were belched forth, the atmosphere became darkened, and the heat was positively unbearable. "There goes the telegraph pole !" shouted a policeman, and sure enough the fire caught hold of one of the posts by the side of the footpath, and it was soon smouldering away. At this juncture the Woodman Hotel seemed to be in great jeopardy. There were noticed to be some people in one of the upper rooms, and from the crowd there arose a tumultuous cry of "Come down; the place is blazing!" Though this was not strictly correct, these persons seemed at the instant to be in imminent peril. In another second those who were standing at the bottom of the street could see nothing twenty or thirty yards off owing to the smoke, which was rapidly carried across by the south east wind, and had any catastrophe happened at the hotel there would probably have been few who would have been acquainted with the fact. Still another event occurred to enliven the proceedings. The greedy flames, even tired of the previously exhilarating work, took hold of the asphalt pavement, which was soon quite ablaze. "It is a perfect sea of fire," remarked a by-stander, who was covering his face with the capacious folds of his hand-kerchief, and he abruptly retired. It was indeed a sea of fire. The resin which was stored at the south-western corner of Messrs. Burford's establishment afforded admirable feed for the flames, and had it been dark (save for the fire) one could easily have read a copy of the Advertiser. The resin and tallow combined commenced to run down the gutter, and even to get into the sewers, and when one could get a distinct view of the conflagration, which was mainly impossible owing to the clouds of smoke, there could be seen almost little cataracts of boiling pitch at various intervals, while the smell was far from being pleasing. Quite a stampede took place at one juncture. The resin which had spread half across the road caught fire and seemed in danger of spreading right along, whereupon civilians and policemen each set out apparently with the idea of finding the nearest way home. The result was a few damaged shins, but when the mob had time to turn back it was seen that the firemen by playing on the flames had managed to extinguish them so far as their inroad on the road was concerned. A piece of furniture, consisting of a large

deal box, was seen to be alight on the southern footpath of Grenfell-street, but a well-directed stream from the hose soon put that matter all right, and more serious matters engrossed the attention of the men of the fire brigade. To all but the veriest optimists it became evident that it was impossible to save any of the property that had been attacked. To prevent the row of houses on East-terrace being reached a hose was brought to bear lower down and some good work was done. There was a cry that the back part of the houses was in danger, but as the wind was blowing from the south-east there was little fear of any fresh mishap. At one time during the evening the wind appeared likely to shift, and had there been any change the effect would have been most disastrous. The flames, however, were fairly well controlled by the firemen, and although they continued to illumine the city until a late hour no greater damage than that which will be found chronicled below was caused. In giving praise to the fire brigade we must not fail to speak well of the police, who acted throughout in a thoroughly impartial way, and did much to secure order among the vast throng of people who assembled to witness the conflagration.

BETWEEN PIRIE AND GRENFELL STREETS.

From the first considerable alarm was experienced by those persons living on East-terrace whose premises lay between Pirie and Grenfell streets, as owing to the immediate dimensions the fire assumed, and the speedy manner in which it destroyed the row of buildings known as Burford's cottages, which are only separated from the houses facing East-terrace by shallow yards, it was feared that the flames would extend to the latter buildings. Every effort to remove the furniture from the houses was therefore made, and in a very short time the terrace presented the appearance of a thriving secondhand furniture mart. It was soon seen, however, that so long as the wind continued to blow from the south-east no particular danger was to be expected from the fire in that quarter, and the work of removing the goods, although it did not altogether cease, was carried on with less activity. But just as the people were lulled into a sense of security a fresh danger presented itself from the boiling resin, which, flowing in multi-farious streams from the burning mass on the premises of Messrs. Burford & Sons, collected in two large torrents that poured through two houses belonging to Mr. G. L. Bonython and emptied themselves in the East-terrace gutter. Mr. Bonython's loss is estimated at about £700. It was recognised that if the flames were to get firmly hold of the liquidy mass nothing would prevent the fire spreading to the premises infested by it, and the attention of the firemen watching the buildings was therefore directed to keeping the flames back from the flowing resin. More than once a running sheet of flames pro-claimed a temporary victory for the fiery element, but the renewed efforts put forth by the men had the effect of averting the danger. On these occasions, however a semi-panic would seize those per-sons who had been driven from their homes by the proximity of the fire, and the work of removing the household utensils, which had at first been deposited on the footpath to a place of greater security, would be at once proceeded with. So great was the alarm in fact occasioned at one period by an increased flow of the boiling resin that several persons considered the total destruction of their dwellings inevitable, and commenced packing their furniture in drays and sending it else-where. The greatest danger was apprehended to the houses south of Mr. Coombe's premises, as besides the fact that the wind prevented the flames spreading in a south and south-easterly direction, the isolated position of the premises to the north of the spot at which the fire started, and the protection afforded them by their paved yards and galvanized iron fences, considerably reduced the chances of their being attacked by the fire. Towards evening, however, the wind

repeatedly chopped round to the south, and the firemen experienced the greatest difficulty in playing on the flames in that direction owing to the blinding volumes of smoke that were driven in their faces. These sudden changes in the direction of the wind had the effect, however, of showing the small danger that was to be expected from the fire spreading in that direction. As the evening wore on it was apparent that the flames had reached their limit, and at the time we went to press the firemen were engaged in reducing the area covered by the flames.

THE SCENE ON EAST-TERRACE.

From the moment of the outbreak of the fire the excitement among the occupiers of the houses facing the park lands was intense. Although the flames were pursuing a course parallel to the backyards of these tenements, yet every now and again they came sweeping across the narrow right-of-way dividing them from Burford's yard, and seemed eager to force an entrance through the windows. So fierce was the heat and so near the flames that the very slightest change of the wind towards the west at any time during the continuance of the fire must have involved the whole of these houses in almost instantaneous destruction. The inhabitants were indeed in sorry plight. The most part sought with the assistance of the many willing helping hands to get their lares and penates into the comparative safety of the pavement or the narrow strip of front garden, but before long a new and more insidious danger threatened. A rolling sea of resin, melted tallow, and boiling soap forced its way down the right-of-way at the rear of the cottages, and then by any convenient outlet rolled through and round the houses on to East-terrace. Every now and again the molten mass caught fire, and it needed the most strenuous efforts of the firemen to prevent this fiery flood from working further and serious destruction. As it was the heaped-up piles of clothing and bedding suffered great injury, and in the general stampede which ensued the personal property of a variety of owners got most hopelessly mixed. Everybody, however, seemed anxious to do his best to aid in putting matters straight, and where any great heap of chattels had accumulated the ostensible owner took charge of the lot, distributing to the various claimants those articles which by the efforts of well-intentioned friends had been erroneously placed in his heap. In this way one lady recovered a lot of very valuable jewellery, which had been rescued from an upper storey and placed in a perambulator on the park lands. About 6.30 p.m. there was a slight panic, as the tide of resin passing from Grenfell-street towards the park lands caught fire and belched forth volumes of flame across the street, but whether from the strong admixture of soapy material or from some other cause, the green and nauseous compound which choked the gutters subsequently contented itself with hissing and spluttering as it hurried away to the main sewer. At 7.20 p.m. there was a slight lull in the wind and indications of a possible change in its direction. Though this lasted only for a moment, it indicated what might be expected if a westerly breeze sprang up. The full force of the hose was for a few minutes directed on to the burning mass at the rear of Mr. Clausen's cottages, and as the water fell and stirred up the resinous compounds which surrounded the smouldering remains of some of the outbuildings the flames seemed for a time to gather fresh vigor, and leaped ever higher and higher round Burford's chimney stack, whilst away to the north-west dense volumes of black smoke hurried off in the cool evening air. This was the beginning of the end, and by the time the sun had sank below the western horizon the denizens of East-terrace found that all immediate cause of apprehension had passed away.

MR. BURFORD'S STATEMENT.

William Burford, the senior partner in the firm of Messrs. W. Burtord & Sons', on being interviewed by one of our reporters, stated that his property, which had been entirely destroyed, extended over an area of fully an acre deep, and about 150 feet in width. Besides this he also possessed a row of cottages adjoining the woodyard on the east, which were also burnt to the ground. The final instalment of £500 on these buildings had only been paid last week. In the centre of the yard three large cauldrons necessary for soap-boiling purposes were erected. The one facing Grenfell-street contained sixteen tons of oil valued at £300, whilst the second one also contained from eight to ten tons of tallow fat, and the men had been engaged during the day in charging it. Mr. Burford added that stock was taken on the 1st of the month, and therefore it would be easy to dis-cover the amount of the damage.

MR. JAMES COOMBE'S STATEMENT.

Mr. James Coombe said, as far as he was aware, the premises were fully insured. He had had nothing to do with the business for the last six weeks, as he had sold out to his brother. At about half past 5 he was sitting inside talking to his brother, John, who had just arrived from Silverton, when some man rushed to the front door and called out that his premises were on fire. He ran out-side and found his timber-yard at the rear of his dwelling-house one mass of flame. He dispatched his brother to arouse the neighbors, and he himself ran to save the two horses, which were located in the stable at the back. He got one out safely, but failed to liberate the other, the heat being so intense that he had almost to crawl back on his knees to save his face from being scorched. The men engaged in the timber-yard had not left above a quarter of an hour before the alarm of fire was given. When he first noticed the fire it was running right in the face of the wind.

MR. THOMAS COOMBE'S STATEMENT.

Mr. Thomas Coombe, the proprietor of the timber-yard, said he ceased work at the same time as the men, namely, twenty minutes past 5. The men had been engaged on moulding work for the past day or two. Had not been in the yard all day, being very busily engaged in the office. Took stock on October 1 last, and all the stocksheets were saved. Employed five men in the yard, and carried on the business of a general timber merchant. Could not say how much he was insured for. He lived at Glenelg, and was just about to enter the train when he was informed of the occurrence.

A WORKMAN'S STATEMENT.

Walter Carroll, a man employed at Coombe's timber-yard, said he had been working at moulding all day, and left work shortly after 5. The only fire used on the premises was in connection with the engine, and that was put out before the men left, He could in no way account for the fire.

THE EXTENT OF THE FIRE.

The following are particulars of the houses in the immediate vicinity of the fire, and the amount of damage that was done ; House No. 1, Mr. Laycock, uninjured; No. 2, Mr. Gubbins, uninjured; No. 3, Mrs, Hunter, damaged slightly by water; No. 4, Mrs. Merton, damaged by water ; No. 5, empty house; No. 6, Mr. Coombs, burnt at back a little, and damaged by water; No. 7, Mr. Hancock, damaged slightly by water ; No. 8, empty house ; No. 9, Mrs. Lee, damaged by water; No. 10, empty house; No. 11, Mr. Bonython, burnt at back and damaged with water ; No. 12, Mr. Briggs, damaged by water ; No. 13, Mrs. Mullen, damaged by water

; No. 14, empty house ; No. 15, do. do.; No. 16, Mr. Nissen, uninjured; No. 17, Mrs. Moyle, totally destroyed ; No. 18, Mr. Napier, total destruction ; No. 19, Mr. Eldridge, burnt to the ground; No. 20, Mrs. Daly, complete destruction ; Nos. 21, Mr. Rötter; 22, empty ; 23, Mr. Gurr; 24, Mr. Ellis; 25, Mr. Oldfield; 26, Mr. Ackland; 27, Mr. Rogers; 28, Mr. Perrett; 29, Mrs. Stephens; and 30, Mr. Cook — all damaged slightly by water ; No. 31, Mr. Schultz, uninjured..

THE INSURANCES.

Messrs. Burford & Sons assure us that their insurances amount to between £8,000 and £9,000. The premises are insured in the South Australian Company, and together with the reinsurances the amounts are, we understand, as follows : — South Australian Company, £2,930; Phoenix, £1,000 ; Mercantile, £1,000 ; Equitable, £1,000; Cornwall, £1,000; Adelaide, £1,000 ; National of Australasia, £500 ; London and Provincial, £700. Mr. George Slous informs us that Mr. Coombe's insurances are as follows : — Phoenix, £1,000 ; South British of New Zealand, £1,000; Equitable, £1,000; Commercial Union, £750; Victoria, £500; United Australian Mutual, £500; Colonial Mutual, £250; total, £5,000.

South Australian Weekly Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1881 - 1889), Saturday 19 December 1885, page 23

THE FIRE AT COOMBE'S AND BURFORD'S.

The wreck of the large, fire that started at Mr. Coombe's timber-yard on Wednesday evening presented little else to view on Thursday morning than blackened timber, charred masonry, and the remains of the machinery, &c., destroyed at Messrs. Burford's factory. The ruins were still smouldering, and volumes of smoke arose as the flames burst out afresh now and again. Several hoses were playing in various places where there was any sign of the fire again becoming strong, but with one exception there was no sign of anything but smoke. The exception referred to was a mass of resin in the centre of Messrs. Burford's factory, which continued to burn until the evening. As the flames were confined simply to the resinous collection, no attempt was made to extinguish it, it being apparently considered better to let it burn out, and simply check it spreading amongst the surrounding debris. The only portions of the factory standing are the stack and the boundary walls. The houses on East-terrace which were damaged present a desolate and deserted aspect, and the injury sustained by them is very apparent. Mr. A. Clausen is one of the largest house property holders in the vicinity, but singularly enough the fire did him very little damage beyond the destruction of his timber-yard, which is leased by Mr. Coombe. A clean sweep was made of the yard of Mr. G. L. Bonython, who lost two workshops and the timber and plant about them, and of Mr. Burford's premises. Besides this considerable damage has been done to several of the houses on East-terrace by means of the boiling fat which poured from the soap factory into the back yards, Mr. Bonython, who was in Tasmania, being a special sufferer. A semi-liquid mass of resin and fat still remained collected across the foot path in front of the factory, and mixed with water was in the afternoon flowing down the watertables. A fair quantity of timber seems to have been preserved intact, while a considerable amount has been only partially damaged. No little surprise is expressed at the good fortune of the Woodman Hotel in escaping destruction. Its walls are completely blackened and the woodwork charred, while it presents, a very deserted appearance. Many of the occupants of the houses adjoining were busy yesterday in replacing the furniture which was removed on Wednesday night. On Thursday evening the last of the flames were entirely

subdued. One of the most lamentable features of the fire is the loss occasioned by some of the poor people in the vicinity. Several of the cottage occupiers lost a quantity of their furniture by the fire itself, while other articles were rendered useless through water. A widow had nearly all her clothes and house linen burnt, two hawkers lost a quantity of stock and furniture, whilst a man named Cook had all his household property destroyed, and lost a considerable sum of money while he was assisting to remove the horses and vehicles belonging to Messrs. Burford & Sons by whom he was employed. It is pleasing to note that efforts are being made to raise subscriptions to relieve those who have lost their property and cannot afford to replace it.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Saturday 19 December 1885, page 4

THE FIRE AT MR. VANDOME'S.

The inquest on the recent fire in Mr. W. Vandome's shop, Rundle-street, was continued at the Sir John Barleycorn Hotel, on Friday. Mr. C. H. Ferrors acted as foreman of the jury. Mr. F. D. Woodforde appeared for the Colonial Insurance Co. of New Zealand; Mr. J. F. Yuill for the Standard, Northern and Guardian Insurance Co.'s; and Mr. A. G. Downer for Mr. Vandome. Inspector Bee also attended.

Charles Stabb, re-called, said, in answer to Inspector Bee, that he left the shop immediately after Seamond. Had there been fire on the top of the stool at the desk in the office he would have seen it. Was positive that there was no candle on the stool. Considered that all due precautions had been taken in placing a candle on the desk. It was the custom to buy candles for the clerk to assist him in doing his work at the desk.

Herbert Marshall, recalled, in answer to Mr. Yuill, said that ever since he entered Mr. Vandome's service, six months ago, candles had been used in the shop. If he had failed to bolt the door between Vandome's and Simmons's shop any one could have entered the former shop. Had given up using candles for the last two months.

Herbert Charles Salter, superintendent of the Adelaide Fire Brigade, said that he was called at 11.58 p.m. on Saturday, December 12, to go to the fire at Mr. Vandome's shop. Immediately turned out reels Nos. 1 and 2 and arrived at the scene of the fire in about three minutes. Found that the fire had been extinguished by the firemen who had been on duty at the Arcade, assisted by the firemen from the city watchhouse. On examination of the premises found that the fire had originated in the staircase, which was severely damaged together with the roof of the shop. Had moved the debris, and his opinion was that the fire started at about three feet from the ground in the staircase lining, and that the damage to the ceiling was due to the flame extending up the staircase lining. The top of the stool was about the same height from the ground as that at which he believed the fire started. By the foreman—The stool must have been standing under the staircase to have been burnt at all. Did not consider that the fire was due to gas escaping and igniting at the front window. By Mr. Yuill—If there had been an escape of gas underneath the place at which the fire originated the gas would have been found to be burning where it was escaping. By Mr. Downer—Judged from the damage done that the body of the fire was 3 feet from the ground.

Harris Winter, shopman, in the employ of Mr. I, Simmons, said that on going upstairs before leaving his master's shop, between a quarter and twenty minutes past 10 o'clock on Saturday night he noticed a smell of escaping gas. It appeared to be stronger in the room

above Mr. Simmons's shop than on the staircase leading to the former. Locked the back door leading upstairs. It was not the custom of Vandome's people to pass through Simmons's shop.

Cyprian William Hardy, fireman, in charge of No. 1 reel, stationed at the Arcade, said that he was called to the fire at 11.50 p.m. on Saturday. On his arrival at Mr. Vandome's shop the fire was burning under the staircase in the right hand corner of the shop about 4 feet from the floor. Noticed that the flames had reached the front part of the shop. Had the water on in about ten seconds, at the end of which time the superintendent arrived. Went around to the back of the shop, and found that the staircase was burnt through. Left shortly after the superintendent came, and returned to the Arcade. Considered that the fire originated under the staircase. By a juror—Found the two doors at the back easy to open.

Police-sergeant Kerr gave evidence as to his attention having been called at about ten minutes to 12 o'clock on the night mentioned to the fire in Mr. Vandome's shop, and as to his assisting to extinguish it. He said that when he first noticed the flames they were coming through an iron-barred window at the back of the shop from the ceiling.

P.C. William Gerrie said that he passed Mr. Vandome's shop at about ten minutes to 12 o'clock on Saturday night, but noticed no fire then.

William Vandome, recalled, said that he still believed that the fire was due to the escape of gas. Was not in a position to state the exact amount of the loss which he would sustain by the fire, but believed that it would not be large.

Arthur James Diamond, wholesale jeweller, said that after making a hasty examination of the stock yesterday he had come to the conclusion that its wholesale value was about £4,000.

Albert Seamond, recalled, said that from his books and from the stocktaking made on February 20, 1885, he believed the value of the stock in his employer's shop on the day of the fire to have been from £5,000 to £6,000. His books showed what had been sold between the former and the latter date. He made up the account yesterday and found that the value of stock fixtures and customers' stock was £5,710 6s. 3d.

The coroner summed up briefly. He said that the evidence showed that no suspicion could be attached to any one as being the originator of the fire. The occupant of the shop (Mr. Vandome) was in no financial difficulties, nor was he, in all probability, over-insured. Two theories had been formulated as to whence the fire arose, but neither was perfectly satisfactory. He would therefore advise the jury to return an open verdict.

The jury after a short retirement brought in the following verdict:—"We are of opinion that the fire originated under the staircase, but there is not sufficient evidence to show the cause." They also added the following rider:—"The jurors are unanimously of opinion that the premises on which the fire occurred should be condemned, as they are highly dangerous to the adjoining establishments, and that the city surveyor's attention should be called to them."

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Monday 21 December 1885, page 2

The East Adelaide Fire.

Coroner's Inquest.

THIS DAY.

An enquiry into the circumstances attending the fire which occurred at Messrs. Coombe's, Burford & Sons, and adjacent premises on Wednesday evening. December 16, was commenced at the National Hotel, Pirie-street, on Monday morning. Mr. E. Rooke was fore-man of the jury. The Crown Solicitor (Mr. C. Mann) appeared on behalf of the insurance companies, and Messrs. Fleming and Dashwood for Messrs. Coombe and Burford & Sons respectively. Mr. Bee watched the proceed-on behalf of the police.

James Coombe, timber merchant, of East-terrace, and late proprietor of the timber-yard in which the fire occurred, stated—Lived in the house adjoining the yard. Was in the yard a few minutes before 5 o'clock on Wednesday, December 16. The men were then working in the shed at the north-west boundary, near the moulding department. Returned to his house, and was in his parlor at about 5.20 p.m., when the alarm of fire was raised. Went into the yard and saw that the shed on the north-west boundary was in flames. There was no fire near the shed ordinarily, and there was no machinery in the place which would be liable to ignite the shavings and light woods around. No one could have got into the yard save with great difficulty. Smoking was strictly prohibited on the premises. The men had all been gone about ten or fifteen minutes before the fire was discovered. One of the men locked up the yard before leaving. Was insured to the full extent, the stock being rather lower than usual. Had no idea how the fire originated. Had every confidence in the men employed in the yard. By Mr. Mann—Was fully insured, the stock in November being valued at £4,600, and the insurance amounted to £5,000. Was to have given up possession of the house on January 1 to Mr. T. Coombe, who had purchased the business. Mr. T. Coombe had taken over the business on November 1.

Thomas Coombe, timber merchant, of East-terrace, said he had purchased the business from his brother. Left the yard on the evening of the fire at a few minutes after 5. Had been working in the office, but went into the yard just as the men were leaving. Went into the shed at the north-west boundary just after the men left to see if all was safe. Everything appeared to be in its usual state. Had reached the Supreme Court, intending to return to his home at Glenelg, when he heard of the fire. Returned at once and found the yard enveloped in flames. Could not form any idea as to where the fire started. Had taken possession of the premises in November. The stock had decreased since then. Could not say to what amount without refer-ring to his books and the stock-sheets, the whole of which were saved. The insurance policies had been lying in the Bank of Australasia for about three months. The wind was blowing from the south-east at the time he reached the fire.

John Hancock, gardener, said his house-yard, adjoined Messrs. Coombes'. The division was a close fence at the bottom and an open fence at the top, the planks having apertures of an inch or so. When he first saw the fire it was only about ten or twelve feet in circumference between the circular saw and the moulding machine. Had been in his back-yard about five minutes when he noticed the flames. Noticed the fire through an aperture between the gate and the fence. Gave the alarm at Mr. Coombe's house. Saw Mrs. Coombe when he gave the alarm. Knew nothing respecting the origin of the fire. By Mr. Henning—The fire was about seven feet from the northern shed when he saw it.

Richard Binney, foreman for Messrs. Coombe, left the yard with the men shortly after 5 o'clock on the night of the fire. Had been in the moulding shed shortly before he left. The nearest fire was at the engine furnace 50 feet away. Had not seen any one smoking on the premises during the day. Had been away from the yard for about twenty minutes when he first heard of the outbreak. On his arrival he found that the main body of flame was centred near Messrs. Burford and Sons' yard. Had never seen anyone light a pipe before leaving the premises. Considered it impossible for anyone to get into the yard after it was closed.

Walter Carrell, enginser in the employ of Messrs. Coombe, had charge of the engine on the premises until 5 o'clock on Decembes 46. There had been no fire in the furnace since 4 o'clock; when he raked the embers out and extinguished them with water. Was at Park-side when he heard of the fire.

Peter Francis Bradey, stableman for Messrs. Coombe, left work at five minutes past 5 on December 15. Could not account for the out-break of the fire. Had never seen anyone smoking on the premises. Had been away twenty minutes, when he heard of the fire. Tried to save one of the horses from the stable, which was wrapped in flames, but failed. The horse was suffocated or burnt to death. Mr. Coombe had saved of the horses, and warned us against venturing into the stable.

(Left sitting.)



Grenfell Street [B 7959]. Grenfell Street, east end, after the fire at Burford's Soap factory. WH Burford and Son were soap and candle makers. The factory was on the corner of Grenfell Street and East Terrace. Residents complained about the smell from the soapworks and

*Peacock's Tannery. A fire which started in the adjoining timber yard destroyed the factory.
Another was built in Sturt Street. 1885. Part of Acre 155 Collection.*