

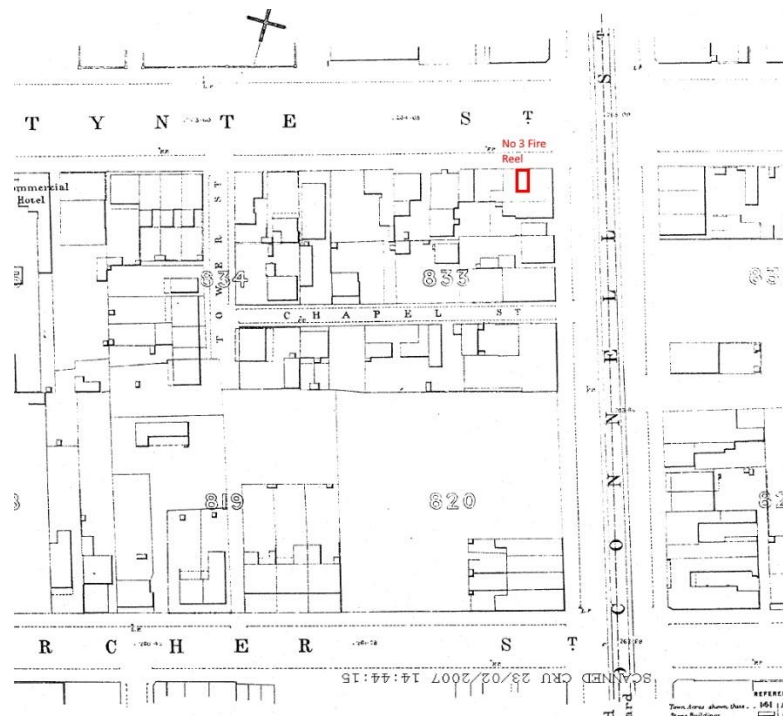
Adelaide Fire Brigade 1887
Locations of Fire Reels

FIRE BRIGADES BOARD.
(Under Acts No 273 of 1882 and No. 288 of 1883)
Office, No 2 Pirie street.
Wentworth Cavenagh, J.P. (Chairman);
E. M. Ashwin, J.P.; F. Wilton
Gardiner; Theo Hack, J.P.; Christian
L. Meyer, J.P.; Alderman Solomon;
H. Y. Sparks, J.P.
Secretary, William Birkinshaw Wilkinson,
J.P.
Superintendent, Henry Charles Salter
FIRE STATIONS.
Head, Flinders street, Superintendent Salter
and six permanent firemen
No 2, Waymouthstreet, Lightsquare, Deputy
Superintendent, Ronald Shearing and
four permanent firemen
REEL STATION.
North Adelaide, three auxiliary firemen

Sands and McDougall 1887



1887 Head Fire Station - Flinders Street



1887 Fire Station - Tynte Street North Adelaide



B 21709

State Library of South Australia - Tynte Street [B 21709], Tynte Street, North Adelaide. Approximately 1875. Creator, Sweet, Samuel White. Part of Acre 864 Collection.

Norwood Number 1 and 2 Reels.

NORWOOD VOLUNTEER FIRE
BRIGADE.

No. 1 Reel, Parade, Norwood
Hon Superintendent—A. J. Diamond
Captain—T. S. Warman
1st Lieutenant—R. E. Kippist
2nd Lieutenant—W. Warman
Firemen—J. E. Gooden, F. R. Steed, J. E.
Steed, R. J. Buttery, P. Little, F. A.
Gray, F. Bleechmore, J. Quilty, W.
Brown

KENT TOWN AND ST. PETER'S.

No. 2 Reel, Maid and Magpie, Stepney
1st Lieutenant—Geo Mayhew
2nd Lieutenant—J. Fisher
Firemen—J. T. Newett, A. Burford, C.
Clivers, A. Franklin
Hon sec, R. E. Kippist, Edward st, Norwood

Bennetts, Mrs A. E.
Nutter, James, laborer
Shaw, Mrs Priscilla
Peddy, Joseph, coachsmith
Englebrecht, Theodore, draper
NORWOOD FIRE BRIGADE STATION
NORWOOD AND KENSINGTON TOWN HALL
Gooden, Geo W, town clerk
Witty, John, collector of rates
Bristow, Jos A, sanitary inspector
Frost, Thos, town surveyor
Kippist, R. E, and Gooden, Jas
Edward, land agents
Norwood Volunteer Fire Brigade
office—Kippist, R. E, secretary
Masonic Lodge (Emulation), meet
second Friday each month

George st



State Library of South Australia - Town Hall, Norwood [B 10245], [General description] Town Hall, Norwood, designed by Alfred Wells and built in 1883. It is a two storey building with arched windows and doorways with the dominant feature being a domed clock tower. The clock is yet to be installed at this time, later to be gifted by Sir Edwin Thomas Smith in 1890. Approximately 1887. Part of Norwood Collection.



Norwood Fire Reel location 1887, SA Property and Planning Atlas.

Port Adelaide Fire Reel Station. Wellington Street, corner South / West of Langham Place.
Number 10 Fire Reel Station.

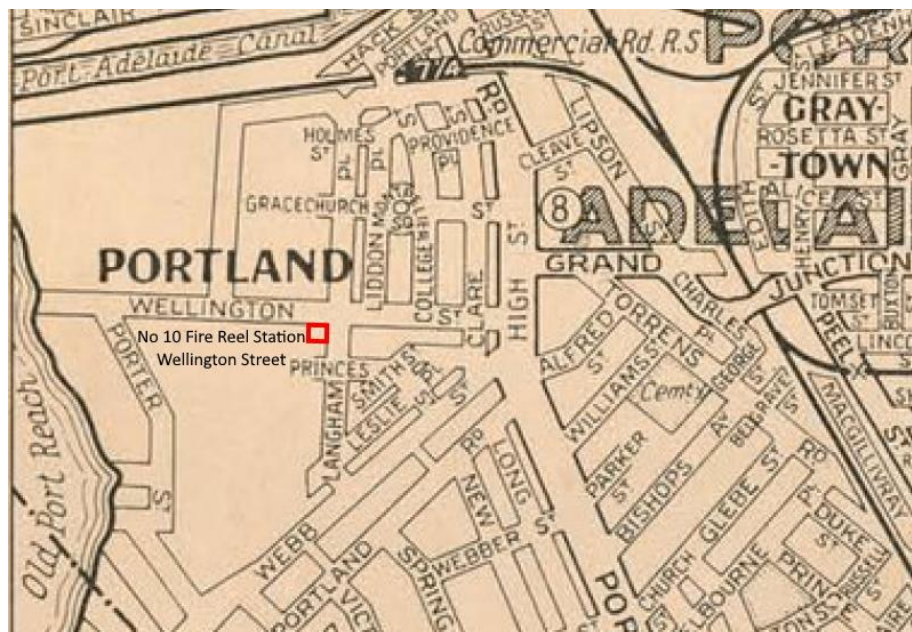
Wellington st—S side
Left-hand side from Port road

Hains, Henry, carpenter
James, James, storeman
James, William O, plumber
Godden, Albert, clerk
McCarthy, James, fitter
McLachlan, Frederick, driver
Shannon, Patrick, butcher
LeMessurier, Adolph H, letter carrier
Tredrea, Jonathan, mason
Lundie, John, enginedriver
Ford, John Tom, baker
McLeod, Peter, storeman
Smart, John, mason
Organ, William W, carpenter
Hains, Charles, laborer
Rogers, Malachi West, carpenter
Hemsley, Herbert, driver
Conrad, Selmar, butcher's foreman
Jamieson, Robert, mariner
Lakie, Charles, master mariner

Langham place

No 10 fire reel station
Wagner, Carl August, baker
Smith, Edwin, laborer

Fire Reel Station No10 - Sands and McDougall 1887



1887 Fire Reel Station - No10 Reel Station. 1936 Adelaide Gregory's street directory

Hindmarsh Volunteer Fire Brigade. Port Road, next to the Land of Promise Hotel.

ROOM
Lady Daly hotel—G. and R. Linn
Birmingham, John, bootmaker
Battye, William, fruiterer
Snook, George, saddler
THE BANK OF ADELAIDE—Burton, W.
L, manager
Milne, Mrs A. A, saddlery and fancy
goods repository
Smith, H, and Son, furnishing iron-
mongers
LeCouteur, H. H, chemist & druggist
Tucker, William Henry, saddler
Mitton, John E, grocer and tea dealer
Ritson, W. W, draper
HINDMARSH VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADE
—Reid, J. M, captain
Land of Promise hotel—Logan, Jas
Lower, Sydney W, chemist & druggist
Arthur, Henry, fruiterer and wine dlr
Brewery lane
Ralph, A. W, baker and confectioner
Parker, Geo A, chemist and druggist
NATIONAL BANK OF AUSTRALASIA—
Smith, James A, manager
Hindmarsh Institute—
HINDMARSH INSTITUTE — Bleech-
more, W. T, secretary
HINDMARSH CHORAL SOCIETY—
Moody, Tom J, sec.
CORPORATION OFFICES — Tait, John,
town clerk and surveyor; Bishop,
T. J, sanitary inspector and rate
collector; Tait, A. L, assistant
town clerk and registrar of dogs
Milner st

Sands and McDougall 1887 - Port Road

South Australian Weekly Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1881 - 1889), Saturday 1 January 1887, page 22

INQUEST ON THE FIRE.

The enquiry into the circumstances connected with the recent fire in Rundle-street, by which the Academy of Music and the establishments of Messrs. R. C. Castle & Co. and A. Cunningham were destroyed, was opened by the city coroner (Mr. T. Ward) at the Sir John Barleycorn Hotel on Wednesday afternoon. Mr. J. T. Turnbull was present as representing the whole of the insurance companies interested. The jury consisted of Messrs, W. Finlayson (foreman), J. Shaw, J. Noonan, W. von Trother, G. P. Doolette, J. C. Haag, and A. Taylor. After having been sworn in the jury were taken by the coroner to view the scene of the fire. On returning, Ronald James Shearing, Deputy-superintendent of Fire Brigades, was examined, and stated— On Christmas Eve I saw smoke rising in the centre of the city. Turned out with my reel, No. 2, and then telephoned to the head station, On getting to the scene we found that the fire was burning in Mr. Castle's shop from the ground floor to the roof. It was also entering the Academy of Music across the right-of-way. We at once got to work at the right-of-way, I telling the men to play on both sides so as to save the Academy if possible, The water seemed to check the flames. At this stage the proceedings were adjourned until Friday.

The enquiry into the fire at the Academy of Music on Christmas Eve was continued by Mr. Coroner Ward on Friday morning. Ronald Shearing, Deputy-Superintendent of the Adelaide Fire Brigade, recalled, said he saw the smoke from Waymouth-street towards Rundle-street, and telegraphed to the head station. Thought when he arrived at the fire it had been alight about 20 minutes. Ordered the men to play on the Academy to save it if possible. The head station reel arrived in less than a minute after him. There was no fire in the front of Cunningham's shop, but at the back. Went into Cunningham's with Clark and Gardner, and as he turned round to get the water on Castle's the wall fell in. Considered it was great carelessness to let people light the windows in the manner they do. Was not surprised at the fire running from Castle's to the Academy. Thought the Academy should have iron windows and shutters. The water supply was very good when he arrived, but they had not enough pressure to throw over the top of the Academy. E. H. Bayer, architect, said he designed the wall that fell down. Castle's walls were built in a more substantial manner than our Building Act or the London Metropolitan Building Act requires. They were all brick, with the exception of the foundation, and they were also built in a good workmanlike manner. There was no Building Act in force at the time of the building of Castle's place. Even if the walls had been thicker that would not have prevented their falling. H. C. Salter, superintendent of fire brigades, said he was called at 7.41 p.m. by telephone from Shearing's station, Waymouth-street. Immediately turned out his reel, and before leaving the station instructed the men on duty to send on the hose cart and turnout the North Adelaide, Norwood, and Hindmarsh fire brigades. Estimated the time taken to reach the fire at about 3½ minutes from the time of receiving the call. On arrival found Castle's shop and the Academy of Music well alight, and the flames through the roof of each. The back of Cunningham's was also alight. After instructing the firemen to get to work, and seeing that No. 2 reel was at that time in front, he went to the back of the fire by way of Gawler-place, and got lines of hose to work from a right-of-way off Gawler-place and also from Grenfell-street. Was not surprised at the fire reaching the Academy. If the building had been provided with iron shutters it would have been safer. Considered the mode of lighting Castle's window very dangerous. There were better plans of doing it. Had ascertained that a message was received at the fire-reel station from the Exchange—"Have you heard, anything of the fire in Hindley street?" The answer was—"No ; we have heard nothing about it." This was about a minute before the message from Waymouth-street. Should think the fire had been burning 20 minutes when he arrived. In summer it takes the turncock about half or three quarters of an hour to go around to close the valves in the district to get a good pressure. Had Castle's wall not fallen they might have saved Cunningham's. The work of erecting street fire-alarms was now in the hands of the Postmaster-General. Believed it was about two months since the Postmaster General was instructed to get these alarms, and he had communicated with the London board on the subject. Florence Williams, entering clerk at the telegraph department, said that on the night of December 24 she received a message from some one, saying, "Put me on to the head fire-reel station." Put him on at 25 minutes to 8. Rang the bell and received the reply ring. Just then some of the operators came in and said there was a fire. Heard someone say through the telephone there was a fire at Castle's. Put several people on the telephone. Mr. Mais rang witness up, and she told him that the brigade was engaged,

but if he wanted ~ to say anything about the fire they were already informed about it. Mr. Mais telephoned from his house. Catherine Henrietta Woods, telephonist at the General Post-Office, said about half-past 7 on the evening of the fire some one rang, Miss Williams said, "I believe there is a fire." Looked at the clock at 25 minutes to 8, just after Miss Williams had connected the fire brigade. A great number of messages came through about the fire asking to be put on to the head-station. Miss Williams asked her to answer someone from Wigg & Poole. Did so, and told him that the brigade were informed. This was about 10 minutes after the brigade had been informed. The first ring came at 25 minutes to 8, and Miss Williams attended to it. Did not know who the message was from. Mr. Mais said, "Ring up the Norwood Fire Brigade." Had no instructions to disconnect in case of fire when a telephone message is going through. R. H. Mais, surveyor, saw the fire three minutes after half-past 7. Saw the flames coming out of Castle's window. Ran to Wigg and Poole's door and met two assistants. Asked them to telephone to the head station. One of the assistants said to the other, "Is there any use risking it?" Told him that he (witness) would take the responsibility of calling the brigade. One of the assistants lit the gas, and witness called the Exchange. A young lady answering, said, "Put me on to the head fire-reel station. There is a fire in Rundle street." She replied, "They are engaged— the alarm has already been given." Went to the corner of Rundle-street and the flames were coming through the roof of Castle's shop. Fixed the time by an appointment he had at the corner at 7.30, and heard the clock chime. Could distinctly see the Post-Office clock, The fire was not visible at 7.30 p.m. Was standing at Vandome's corner. Was positive as to the time. A. H. Beyer, accountant, saw a lighted bundle in the north eastern corner of Castle's window at exactly 25 minutes to 8. The fire did not run quickly through the window. The gas was not lit in the window where the fire was. Saw a man go quickly away from the window, and a policeman came up and took charge of the door. The fire could easily have been put out at first. As soon as an umbrella at the top of the window caught fire the escaping gas exploded at the top, and the whole place was in a blaze. It was 20 minutes to 8 when the fire burst through the roof at Castle's. It took eight minutes till the smoke came out of the Academy, and it was nearly eight and a half minutes before the first reel came up. Five minutes after the fire broke out the flames were coming through the roof. Believed the Academy caught fire almost immediately through the circular windows, which were open at the time. Richard Waddy, of the Telegraph Department, said the new fire-alarms were very perfect, but he did not think they would at first be extended further than Adelaide and the Port. At the Post-Office they used an electric rod for lighting, which was perfectly safe, no fire being emitted till the button is pressed. Paul Phillips, assistant in Castle's shop, said it was his duty to light the show window. While lighting the window noticed that a hanging piece of lace had caught alight from a spark, and called out for water. Half a can of water was brought. The gas was escaping at the time in the window, and the light goods there were rapidly taking fire. Used the ordinary gas-rod with an unprotected wax taper at the end to light the gas. Did not know if any one was sent from the shop for the fire brigade. Did not know of any previous fire occurring at Castle's through the use of this taper. The only cause of the fire at which he could guess was that some fire dropped off the taper. Was not sure but that the whole of the taper may have fallen. He had to reach 9 or 10 feet into the window to light the gas. Could not reach the

goods which were on fire except by the back, when the flames would have been underneath him. William Gordon was negotiating to commence duty as treasurer and general manager of the Academy of Music from the beginning of the new year. A few minutes after twenty minutes past 7 he saw something drop on the gas bracket in Castle's window, and remarked that it looked like a flimsy necktie. The jets were lighted then, and apparently all of them. Saw something drop to the bottom of the window, apparently a part of the same necktie, and it set light to something on the floor of the window. The fire was also creeping up to the top corner of the window next the Academy. A man in the shop tried to extinguish what was burning on the floor, and in stooping down to do so his foot went through the window. Could not say if it was Mr. Phillips. Within a few moments of the breaking of the window the whole window was in a furnace-like blaze. Did not notice any explosion of gas. Between nine and ten minutes afterwards I saw fire going into the louvres of the Academy, Made an effort to enter the Academy to work the hose near the proscenium, but found the place locked up. The fire appeared to be sucked in by the ventilating windows of the Academy from Castle's building. It would be between 25 minutes past 7 and the half-hour that the fire started. Mrs. Kate Cullen said that while standing in the street she saw a spark drop from the lighting-rod on to some lace while the window was being lighted up. The fire caught a parasol, and went all round the window. Saw the man light the jets all round and then go out. Went away before the window broke. The man who was lighting the gas was standing in the window. C. H. Brassington, assistant in Castle's shop, turned on the gas while Phillips lighted the jets. Believed some had been lighted when the latter called out "fire," and "water." Could only get about two quarts of water, there being no pressure at the tap. Phillips threw the water over the fire, but it had no effect. Did not see the fire start. Someone outside broke the window, and the glass fell on witness and the two police officers. Turned off the gas from the window before going for water. There was no one in the window that evening. No one could have got into the window after the fire started, as he would have had to knock down all the back of it in order to get in. C. A. Chalk, drapers' assistant, was in the tailors' shop under the Academy of Music when the fire broke out. Ran to the hose in the Academy of Music, and if there had been sufficient pressure believed he could have confined the fire to the window. Brought it on to the balcony over the lane, but found there was no pressure, and he took it back. The hose threw the water 3 or 4 feet only, and when he held it up to play on Castle's window the water ran down his arm. Police-Constable O'Brien should have stopped the fire from entering the rest of the shop if a hose had been on the spot when he first saw the flames— about 7.35. Asked someone to go for the brigade while he was on the way to Castle's, but did not know whether this was done. A. Henderson, the night watchman at the Academy, took the hose on to the front balcony to play on the window, but the pressure was too weak. Seeing the danger to the gallery between the two buildings got out the second hose, but the pressure was too weak to go across to the other wall. Had never known the pressure so low as it was that night. Alex. Cunningham, importer, of Rundle street, was insured for about £23,500 on the whole of his stock, fixtures, and buildings. That would not cover his loss by a long way. B. C. Castle, draper, of Rundle-street, said the fire started in his shop. Believed a piece of the wax taper must have fallen off and originated the fire. Had used the same gas-rod for 15 years without any accident. Was insured for £10,750 on the

burnt building, including stock and fixtures. That would not cover his loss. Did not know how the window was broken. Saul Solomon, photographer, said he had lost on the Academy of Music as joint owner with Mr. Castle. The insurance on the Academy building was £5,000, and there was £1,500 on the ornaments and furniture. Did not have an iron drop scene. One had been introduced into a German theatre; it fell down half an hour before the performance was to begin, and it took six weeks to clear it away. (Laughter,) He and his partner would sustain about £2,000 loss by the fire. Heavy iron doors and shutters might have pre-vented the fire getting into the Academy. There was an eddy of wind at all times in the lane between the Academy and Castle's shop. The Coroner, in summing up, dwelt on the importance of drapers using the electric lighting rod instead of the antiquated waxtape with its attendant dangers, and he hoped the secretaries of insurance companies would in future insist on this improvement being used in any building which they agreed to insure against fire. The jury, after considerable deliberation, re-turned a verdict that the fire was purely accidental, adding that the present mode of lighting shop windows is to be deprecated, and recommending that where possible it should be done from the outside of the window enclosures, especially where light inflammable materials are being shown. They were also of opinion that better provision should be made for a sufficient supply of water in the event of a fire, as it is beyond doubt that had there been an ample supply of water the progress of the fire in question would have been materially stayed ; and they strongly recommended for the consideration of the Fire Brigades Board the advisability of procuring without delay a steam fire engine. They are further of opinion that no time should be lost in the erection of the electric fire alarms for which arrangements are now being made by the Postmaster General.

Adelaide Observer (SA : 1843 - 1904), Saturday 1 January 1887, page 17

THE BRIGADES AND THE SUPERINTENDENT.

Mr. H. C. Salter, the Superintendent of Fire Brigades, who, by-the-way, was married only the day before, made the following statement to one of our representatives;—"At 7.41 p.m. on December 24 I received a call from Waymouth-street Fire Station (No. 2 Brigade) to a fire in Rundle-street. Upon turning out a large fire could be distinctly seen—in fact the flames therefrom were rising mountains high. I ordered out the North Adelaide Brigade and also the Hindmarsh and Nor-wood Volunteer Brigades. Upon arrival at the fire, which was some time between 7.40 p.m. and 7.45 p.m., I found the Academy of Music, Messrs. Castle & Co.'s premises, and one of Mr. Cunningham's shops all well alight from top to bottom, and the flames coming through the roofs of each. I wish here to complain of the neglect of the public, or rather of those whose premises were at the time in danger, in not informing the Head Fire Brigade Station or some of the other brigades of the conflagration. There were several telephones in the vicinity, in fact within a few yards of the fire, and not one was used. There were telephones at Messrs. Marshall and Co.'s, Birks's, Primrose's, and the Globe Hotel. It was stated that the Arcade tele-phone was out of order at the time, but this most have been untrue, as messages were sent through it to the Head Station on the following day and subsequently. Nothing in the meantime had been done to it by the Post-Office authorities. That telephone is used every night by the fireman who goes on duty. Had we been called before of course we should have

been at the fire before. We rely to some extent on the public to assist us in these matters. We are always in readiness, and the utmost is done to answer a call in the shortest possible time. We have permanent men about the station, and not more than one man is allowed away on leave at the same time, and without the assistance of the public we cannot be expected to attend on fires. The public must recollect that fire-men do not patrol the streets watching for fires. From the time we receive a call we can leave in thirty or fifty seconds. The brigade were hissed and hooted when we arrived at the scene because we were late: but whose fault was it that we were ten minutes after the fire broke out? Not ours, decidedly. There was no cause for the way in which the public received us, and all the firemen and myself were very much hurt at our reception. Of course the crowd of people were unaware of the cause of our being late in arriving. I was at the Head Station when the Waymouth street Brigade telephoned, and attended the fire as soon as possible with the Head Station Reel. On arrival No. 2 Reel was getting to work, and No. 1 was not long behind. No. 3 Brigade was also soon on the spot. Messrs. Primrose & Co.'s reel was at work from the beginning. This reel was playing at the back to prevent the fire approaching the brewery.

The brigade hose was laid through their premises to work on the back part of the fire.

The cause of the rapid falling of the walls is, in my opinion, owing to the very shoddy buildings that are being erected at the pre-sent time under the existing Building Act, and when attacked by fire Become nothing short of mantraps. These buildings seemed to be of that description. Where the two men were struck there was no fire at all. They were killed in Mr. Cunningham's shop, which was not alight in front. A hose had been run into the shop to cut off the fire which was making its way at the back from extending to Mr. Cunningham's other establishment. When we arrived in Rundle-street we had as full a pressure as we could expect, but during the summer months the pressure is not sufficient to play on a fire until the water is localized by the turncocks, which process occupies from half an hour to three-quarters of an hour. While referring to this, perhaps I may as well add that it is considered necessary, that a steam-engine for casting water should be provided. I gave my opinion on this subject last year I think, and I consider that such an engine should be procured for the protection of the city. Very high buildings are now being erected, and with our present means of conveying water a great deal of time must elapse until sufficient pressure is given to us by the turncock to reach the upper stories of these buildings. If we had a steam-engine we could throw water almost immediately after arrival on any of the buildings in Adelaide—in fact, within eight minutes after leaving our stations, i.e., the time taken up for raising 100 lb. of steam, the quantity required to work the engine. At the time of the falling of the walls on the two firemen I was engaged getting lines of hose to work from Grenfell-street and Gawler-place, and was not acquainted of the accident until Clark had been dragged out from the debris. The fire was under control at 11 o'clock, but it was not until 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning that I was able to knock off the water and muster all the firemen in front of the Academy and find out if any were missing. Immediately it was ascertained that a man was missing. I engaged six labourers to search for Gardner, but owing to the dangerous condition of the overhanging walls I knocked the men off in three-quarters of an hour, feeling that I could not endanger six lives in searching for the remains of

one who must have been dead many hours. There was a great outcry from the public to search for the missing man, and volunteers were freely offered to continue the search, but I could not take the responsibility of allowing them to do so. I speak in very high terms of the prompt attendance of the volunteer brigades (St. Peters, Norwood, and Hindmarsh) and of the manner in which they worked at the fire. The willing-ness and eagerness they displayed was really more than could be expected. This of course applies to all the firemen. I also received the greatest possible assistance from the strong body of police who kept the crowd back. I believe the Hydraulic Engineer was present, and other heads of that department. The turncocks worked hard to give a full pressure of water, and all whose duty it was to help in subduing the flames worked in a smart and creditable manner. I was not able to give the brigade rest between 7.45 p.m., when we arrived, and midnight, when all the firemen were sent home, and three members of the St. Peters Brigade were left in charge."

Areas' Express (Booyoolie, SA : 1877 - 1948), Friday 7 January 1887, page 2

FIRE ! FIRE !!

A raging and destructive fire is at any time bad enough, but when the disaster is accentuated by a deplorable loss of life such as occurred recently in Adelaide, attention is pretty sure to be drawn to the means of preventing or speedily reducing such conflagrations. The inquest on the fire which destroyed for the third time the Academy of Music, brought out very pain-fully the defective system of building in the City. In spite of the Building Act, and in spite of the boast that the Academy had at last been rendered fire-proof, the evidence showed that the method of building was not only ineffectual for the prevention of fire, but was positively dangerous to life and limb. Clark and Gardner bravely did their duty as firemen, and paid the penalty with their lives ; and it is painful to think that such men should be placed in extra danger by shoddy buildings and ricketty walls. Again, the Fire Department have insisted for some time past that a steam fire-engine is necessary, but the supineness of the Corporation and the niggardliness of Fire Insurance Companies have combined to prevent the supply of so simple a mechanical appliance. The system pursued in America is a great contrast to that in vogue among ourselves. There the Fire Brigades are well organised and splendidly equipped. The fire engines and horses are always standing ready. On an electric signal, the harness falls upon the horses, is attached to the engine, the firemen are in their seats and a few seconds sees them on their way to the scene of a fire. In country towns none of this is possible, for if there were brigades and engines there would be no water. The happy escape of the Crystal Brook Institute building last week was due to the water service with which the inhabitants of that Town have provided themselves. The promptitude and courage of Mr and Mrs Kealley, and the helpers who rallied to the spot, would have been all in vain but for the existence of the water-main in the street outside. People who resolutely oppose a scheme of water-supply for Gladstone on the ground of expense may well ponder over the significance of such an event. The few shillings paid as water rate are well laid out if only viewed in the light of an extra fire insurance premium, and it is surely worth something to be able to lie down with a greater sense of security at night. It is worth the consideration of Fire Insurance Companies

whether they might not sensibly reduce the premiums on fire risks situated near a water main.

Adelaide Observer (SA : 1843 - 1904), Saturday 15 January 1887, page 35

FIRES, AND HOW TO FIGHT THEM.

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT OF FIRE BRIGADES.

(By our Special Reporter.)

At the present time, when the water supply is somewhat limited, a good deal, of uneasiness has been caused as to the result of a large fire breaking out in the city. With the lamentable fire in Rundle-street on Christmas Eve still in mind many thoughtful men have felt anxious as to the means the Fire Brigade has at its disposal for fighting the fire. To find out the real state of affairs a member of our staff on Monday waited on Superintendent Salter and had a chat with him on the subject. Mr. Salter was as courteous as usual, and willingly answered any questions put to him by the reporter.

A STEAM FIRE-ENGINE.

The first matter referred to was the desirability of having a steam fire-engine to aid the brave firemen in their battles with the flames. On this subject Mr. Salter feels very strongly. He said—"I pointed out to the Fire Brigade Board last summer that on account of the great size of the warehouses now being put up in the city, and the gradually decreasing pressure of water owing to the greater demand from the suburbs and to the extension of the deep-drainage system, it is absolutely necessary that we should be provided with a steam fire-engine. The Board took the same view as myself, and passed a resolution urging the Government and the Corporation to assist in getting a fire-engine. The Corporation offered £100 towards the cost, the Government did not think it was part of their duty to get the engine, and the Insurance Companies putting the responsibility of protecting property from fire on the Government and municipal authorities, nothing practically has been done up to the present. Now, if a fire should break out on the upper floor of any of the large warehouses we would be unable to get at the flames until they burned within our reach, as we could not get sufficient pressure of water under half or three-quarters of an hour. That time would be occupied by the turncock going round the district in which the fire was situated and shutting down the valves to localize the water and run the supply direct to the neighbourhood of the fire. The maximum water pressure we have been able to get is 80 lb. to the square inch. If we could obtain that immediately on our arrival at a fire we would with the present plant be able to work a fire in the largest ware-house in the city, but before the pressure can be localized the fire might obtain a destructive hold on the building. It certainly would if it began on an upper floor. A steam fire-engine would give us an in-creased pressure in from six to eight minutes, which I calculate would be the time taken in raising 100 lb. of steam required to draw the water from an extemporized dam made of canvas." "How would you fix the dam to receive the water ?" "You see the dam would be made of canvas, and would fold up. Where there were street plugs we would fix the canvas receiver over the plug. If we had a sufficient supply of water to fill it, no matter what the

pressure was, the water would be drawn into a pipe and be forced out of it on to the fire. With a steam engine we could combat any fire, even if the water pressure in the street was only 20 lb. to the square inch. Where there are pillar hydrants in the street we would have to fill the canvas dam or cistern by means of short lengths of hose. As soon as the cistern contained the water it would be distributed by the steam engine." "What would a suitable steam engine cost?" "A steam-engine suitable for this city could be delivered in Adelaide at a cost of £500. That is a mere trifle compared with the damage done by fire. If fires are to be stopped one will have to be got at once, but, of course, if they are to be allowed to burn we can go on as at present. I may say that hitherto this summer the water pressure has been better than last summer. One afternoon last year I turned out, and the gauge registered 14 lb. to the square inch. With that pressure it is patent to any one what the consequence would have been had a large fire broken out. We could have done nothing with it."

GRENADES AND CHEMICAL EXTINGUISHERS.

"What is your opinion of hand grenades and similar appliances for extinguishing fires?" "As the head of the Fire Brigade I consider that extraordinary care should be exercised before recommending to the public any chemical fire-extinguishing appliance, because, coming from the head of the brigade, the public might, if I recommended any grenade, place a false dependence on it, and neglect to call out the brigade on the start of a fire. These things have been shown by experiments to be effective in the incipient stages of a fire, but when wood has become thoroughly alight they are powerless to extinguish it. My opinion has been endorsed by the Superintendents of the Melbourne and Sydney Brigades and many insurance journals have expressed a similar conclusion. Grenades are designed to generate a gas which will exclude the air and extinguish the flames, but that will only be the case when it is feeble or gaseous. Grenades are not usually so plentiful as water, and as it is necessary to get right at the flame to extinguish it with a grenade, a bucket of water would probably be as effective, and might do more execution. I know of a factory in America where they manufactured grenades being burnt down, and as there were some hundreds in stock at the time I fail to see how a fire could be overpowered with two or three when so many hundreds proved in-effective. I have no hesitation in saying that chemical extinguishers have not been brought to a state that will enable us to do without water and an organized brigade."

FIRE ALARMS.

"For an alarm of fire," pursued Mr. Salter, "we must always be dependent to some extent on the public. It is therefore necessary that we should afford the public every facility for communicating with us on an outbreak of fire. We pay 5s. to any person who gives the alarm first, but some people are so inconsiderate that they grumble at the smallness of the reward. When Mr. Todd, the Post-master-General, was visiting England, at the request of the Fire Brigade Board, he inspected the latest system of fire alarms and interviewed the different shops where they are manufactured. The elaborate system in use in London is not required in a small city like Adelaide, but we have adopted a system that has but recently been invented, and will answer all requirements. A small box with a glass face will be attached to some telegraph posts. Inside the box a handle connected by a wire with the nearest fire station is placed,

and on a fire breaking out the person who sees it is re-requested to smash the glass and turn the handle. That will cause a shutter to drop in the fire station, and indicate whence the alarm was given, but will not show the exact spot of the fire. The person who gives the alarm is, therefore, requested to remain at the post until the arrival of the brigade in a few moments. At present it is only intended to erect four of these alarms. One will be in front of the English, Scottish, and Australian Chartered Bank, in Rundle-street east; the second in front of Mr. Fimister's jewellery shop, in King William-street; the third at Hurtle-square; and the fourth at Whitmore-square. In addition there will be a telephone wire direct from the Arcade to the head station, and another wire from the Watchhouse, so that we should have warning of a fire from any part of the city simultaneously with its discovery." "Is not the western part of the city rather neglected?" "Oh, no. The alarm can be given from Fimister's or the Watchhouse, while the Waymouth-street Station can be reached from the western end of the city in a minute or so."

"What do you think of the suggestion to have a watchtower in some central part of the city?" "I do not believe in a watchtower, it would be comparatively useless. A fire could not be seen from a watchtower if it started on the basement of any building; nor until it had burnt through the roof of the premises. Of course if we are to save a place we must know of the fire as soon as it starts; besides some people knowing that a man was on the lookout for fires would not exert themselves to alarm us if they saw a fire start. I think the system we are adopting is as perfect as possible. It will be ready at once, the telegraph men having been engaged to-day in placing the wires in the station."

THE FIRES DURING THE YEAR.

"Can you give me anything about the fires during the year?" "Most of the fires that have occurred during the year have been very small, thanks to the alarms having been given in good time. There have been several large conflagrations prevented by timely warning. There was the fire at Menz's the jeweller's for instance. If we had not got instant warning of that the basketmaker's next door—which was only separated by a thin wooden partition—must have gone. The fires at Moss's, Whelan & Landvogt's, Vandome's, Rhodes's in James - place, Harris, Scarfe's, Harris's, Kleeman's, and Beaney's at North Adelaide, were all discovered in time to prevent their spreading, but all were very dangerous. The placing of men with hand-reels in different parts of the city has been attended with excellent results. When the alarm is fixed at Fimister's the man now at the Watchhouse will be placed there, but the Fire Station can still be communicated with from the Police Station. There was a curious fire at Harris's, the clothier's, in Rundle-street during the year. Only a few oilskin coats were destroyed, but the fire was started by the intense heat igniting the vegetable oil in the coats. I think it worth re-cording that the number of Park Lands fires this summer has been small compared with last year. I attribute this to my having stopped giving rewards for information regarding Park Land fires. Last summer we were called out almost every afternoon. This year there have been very few fires of that description, and I am inclined to believe that the reward had a good deal to do with the origin of some of them."

CONCLUSION.

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18 April 2026

In conclusion Captain Salter said:— "On a fire starting I would advise that the brigade should at once be alarmed. If, instead of trying to put out the fire that occurred in Rundle-street on Christmas Eve, an alarm had been sent to the station I believe the flames would have been con-fined to Castle's western shop. I have twelve men under my charge in the city, in addition to three men at North Adelaide who are retained by the payment of a small sum annually, and paid for the time they are actually engaged at a fire. It is left to my discretion whether I will leave the city for a fire in the suburbs, but, during the summer, I would not feel justified in leaving the city un-protected. At the same time, if a large conflagration occurred, I would send some assistance. The Norwood Volunteer Fire Brigade and the Hind-marsh Volunteer Fire Brigade, which are purely volunteer organizations, have worked very amicably with me, and have rendered excellent service on more than one occasion. They would, I think, be capable of dealing with any small fire in their district. There is one matter I would particularly like to call attention to. That is the custom of putting varnished wooden ceilings in some of the large warehouses. This is almost offering a premium for the spread of a fire. The ceiling of the ground floor and the floor of the first floor are generally about 17 inches apart. That space is often time filled in with diagonal wooden supports, and when a fire starts on the ground floor and reaches the ceiling it ignites the varnish at once and goes through the whole building. Wooden partitions are just as dangerous. Every person should be compelled to have a plaster ceiling, for that would check the fire and give us a chance of confining it to the one floor. Perhaps after two or three large fires the people will recognise the danger of erecting buildings as they are at present constructed, but the sooner they are compelled to do away with the wooden ceilings and partitions the better."

South Australian Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1858 - 1889), Thursday 10 February 1887, page 6

AN INTERVIEW WITH AN ADJUSTER OF FIRE CLAIMS.

For the past seven years Mr. J. Ford Yuill has been the principal adjuster of fire claims for the insurance companies doing business in South Australia and during that time has been called upon to act in his professional capacity in connection with most of the great fires which have occurred, in South Australia. A representative from this paper who waited upon him to learn if possible some of the details of the work carried out by Mr. Yuill found that gentleman in his office, Exchange, Pirie-street, and gives the following account of his interview :— "Well," said Mr. Yuill when he had learnt the object of the visit, "you know that I obtain information while investigating claims submitted to me that I cannot impart to the press, but I am willing to tell you anything I am at liberty to communicate. Yes, I have good opportunities of judging how fires originate. Fully 60 per cent, in my opinion, are purposely started by the proprietors or occupiers of the premises. I can come to no other conclusion on this point in the face of the discoveries made subsequent to the destruction of the premises. A considerable number are purposely caused by malicious persons, a portion through carelessness, and a few are the result of pure accidents. The fire at Mr. Dowie's tannery belonged to the last class, and I think it originated through spontaneous combustion intensified by the heat of the sun. You ask why I have come to the conclusion that such a large pro-portion of the fires are lighted by interested persons

? Well, take haystacks for instance. It is wonderful how frequently the electric fluid strikes the insured haystack and misses the church steeple." "Why is it that so many fires occur during the absence of the occupiers of the premises ?" "It is an easy thing for the owners of property to arrange for an out-break of fire during their absence from the premises. Several very simple plans for effecting this are known to the police and the insurance offices, but the system most commonly adopted is what is known as the 'candle trick.' "Considerable difficulty is at times experienced in satisfactorily settling claims. People generally seem to think that if they insure for a certain amount they have a right to receive the sum mentioned in the policy whether the stock or premises destroyed were worth the money or not. They entirely overlook the fact that fire Insurance is merely an indemnity against loss by fire. It is wonderful how things that are regarded as useless prior to a fire assume a high value in the eyes of the owner after they have been reduced to ashes. No doubt this is one of the weaknesses that 'flesh is heir to,' and one from which few are free. Another great point on which the public mind needs disabusing is that it is the duty of the companies to ascertain the value of stocks, fittings, &c., before taking the risk. The cost of doing this would more than swamp the amount of the premium charged even if they could rely upon the same quantity of stock being on the premises at the time they were burnt as when the insurance was effected. This, however, in many cases is not so, stocks in some instances being reduced as much as 50 percent, during two years." "To what do you attribute the fatal accident which occurred during the great Christmas Eve fire?" "I believe it was caused entirely by the absence of division walls in Messrs. R. C. Castle & Co.'s drapery shop. A similar accident happened during the course of Mr. Gay's fire, but fortunately there was on that occasion no loss of life. It was just a touch and go, the long walls of the premises crushing through the roof of Messrs. Smith & Parker's premises just as the firemen were entering the shop. So long as the premises in our business streets are built on the present lines, the side walls running the whole depth of the structure without cross walls of any kind, these accidents are bound to happen, the long and high stretches of walling being unable to stand when subjected to intense heat. "Is there a good deal of complaining in consequence of the companies having raised the rates of insurance of late? People who do not know or who have forgotten what enormous losses the companies have of late sustained find fault with the rates, but the rise was inevitable. Already the companies doing business in the colony have paid away in satisfaction of fire claims the whole of the amount that will be received as premiums during the 12 months, less the working expenses, and there are still the losses of the last five months of the financial year to be met. The yearly income of the companies is about £63,000, and it is therefore plain that the claims must be enormous. During the last two or three years the losses of the companies as a whole have been very heavy. Some have of course escaped more easily than others, but on the average their expenditure has been considerably in excess of their receipts. "I believe that many of the large fires that have occurred in Adelaide of late years have been maliciously started, but in every country suffering from financial depression there is a great increase in the number of disastrous conflagrations. The most striking example of this was furnished by Cape Colony a few years ago, where the burning of insured premises became more and more common as the financial depression became more widely felt. It is difficult to suggest a remedy for this, but in one of the districts of Victoria fires

occurred so frequently that the companies refused to insure any premises there, the consequence being that for three years not a fire happened in the district. It is often urged by people as a reason that their claim should be liberally considered that they have paid premiums for 20 or 30 years with-out during that time having made a claim on the insurance company ; but this would not be so frequently urged if it were not remembered that a person who had paid for the insurance of his household goods at the present English rate, 1s. 6s. per cent. per annum from the time of the Saxon Heptarchy till the present day, would not have subscribed sufficient to cover the total loss of the goods that have been insured. "At times the adjustment of fire claims is rendered extremely difficult because the proprietors of even large business houses not only neglect to take stock periodically, but do not keep their books by double entry, nor even by proper single entry. It has frequently been found quite impossible for the owners to tell even approximately what was the value of the goods on the premises after the place had been destroyed. If the stock and other books were properly kept in our business houses, and stock were taken regularly, there would be far less difficulty in settling claims. "Very frequently the hypotheses put forward to account for the out-break of fires are most amusing. If a haystack is fired under suspicious circumstances a bottle and some matches are frequently found in the vicinity of the stack, and the suggestion is made that a swag-man is the culprit. On one occasion a bottle containing about four nobblers of brandy, together with a blanket and three sticks of tobacco, was found near the scene of a fire, but when the old theory was propounded one of the jurymen remarked, 'Swagman might have left the bottle, but never was one known to leave four nobblers or his blanket behind him, no matter how great a hurry he might be in.' In the course of an enquiry into the cause of a fire which destroyed a grocer's shop in one of the suburbs a little time ago the police-sergeant, in the course of his examination of the proprietor of the establishment, asked him 'Were there any rats about the premises?' 'Stop, stop,' cried the coroner. 'Oh, never mind, go on.' The next question was ' Were there any matches in the shop ?' Upon this the coroner remarked, 'For goodness sake don't continue that line of examination, sergeant. We know rats and mice will attack lucifers when there is nothing else for them to eat, but I never knew them to leave cheese and bacon untouched to feast on wood and brimstone.'

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Monday 21 February 1887, page 2

FIRE BRIGADES' JUBILEE. — South Australia is to be represented at the Grand United Australasian Fire Brigades' Jubilee which takes place in Melbourne on February 24, 25, and 26 by the following Volunteer Fire Brigades:—Norwood, Captain T. S. Warman and six men ; Kent Town and St. Peters, 1st Lieutenant F. J. Fisher and four men ; Hindmarsh, Captain J. Reed and four men ; Payneham, Captain C. Blake and four men; Mount Gambier, eleven men; Port Pirie, three men. A sufficient number of men and all appliances will be left in charge of the above Brigade Stations. Free passes have been granted on the Victorian side of the Border to the whole of the above, and although the same concession could not be obtained this side of the Border Mr. E. T. Smith, M. P., with his usual generosity (and the hope of assistance from other friends) has forwarded to Mr. R. E. Kippist, Hon. Secretary Norwood Volunteer Fire Brigade, a cheque to defray the fares of the Norwood, Kent

Town, St. Peters, and Payneham Brigades, so that South Australia shall be well represented. The brigades leave by this afternoon's express.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Saturday 9 April 1887, page 5

Resignation of the Adelaide Fire Brigade.

On Thursday, April 7, the ten firemen in the Adelaide Fire Brigade forwarded their resignations to the Superintendent (Mr. H. C. Salter), and at a special meeting of the Fire Brigades Board in the afternoon the resignations were accepted. Six of the men are stationed at the Head Station in Flinders-street, in charge of Superintendent Salter, and control No. 1 Reel, while the other four, located in Waymouth-street, in command of the Deputy Superintendent, have charge of No. 2 Reel. Recently the Superintendent was taken ill with typhoid fever, and had to seek rest in Sydney. During his absence from Adelaide Deputy Superintendent Shearing was left in charge. On his return the Superintendent asserts that he found that the brigade was not efficiently managed during his illness, and complaints had been made regarding the men. A special meeting of the Board was convened shortly after the Superintendent's return to the colony to hear charges laid by a citizen against the Deputy Superintendent. The charges were held to be substantiated, and in accordance with the Board's wish Mr. Shearing resigned. Mr. Shearing's week's notice expired either on Wednesday or Thursday. On Thursday applications for the position of second officer at £150 per annum were advertised for by the Board. The firemen on the same morning forwarded their resignations. They gave various reasons for doing so, the principal being that the action of the Board gave them no chance of promotion. The majority of the firemen consider that they are qualified for the office, and feel indignant that one of their number should not have been selected to fill the vacancy. The men will leave the Board's service on April 14. It has been stated, too, that the men complain of receiving insufficient pay. We are informed that two firemen get £130 each and the other eight £120 each per annum. Till recently the brigade has worked in a most orderly and contented way. Most of the firemen have been connected with the brigade for two years. Below will be found a letter from the men, giving their version of the case :— TO THE EDITOR. Sir—No doubt Superintendent Salter will try to make his own case good by the resignation of the Brigade. The rupture is not between the Brigade and the Board but between the Superintendent and the Brigade. So that the public may know the real facts of the case I will state them. We forward you copy of resignations—not for publication—sent by us to the Board, and I think you will then know the real cause. This morning's Register states the men gave various causes for resigning, the principal being that the action of the Board gave them no chance of promotion. This is false, as the principal reason for so doing is: Mr. Shearing, the practical man, having resigned we can place no confidence whatever in the Superintendent ; also his generally intolerant manner. When he heard that we had all sent our resignations to the Board he made the remark at No. 2 Station that " that was what he had been working for for a considerable time." There is an order in the Brigade, made by the Superintendent himself, that in case of promotion the most eligible men will be selected from the permanent staff. This order he has ignored altogether, for by the advertisement he gives the preference to married men. In reference to the statement in the paper that

no member of the Brigade is competent to undertake the duties connected with a steam fire-engine, the Superintendent when spoken to on the point by the men said the reporter had made a mistake. We have men who have served in the London Fire Brigade double the time the Superintendent has, and one who is perfectly competent to take charge of a steamer. We wish to know how a second officer can undertake the duties of attending to a fire and looking after the safety of his men, because the whole of his time will be taken up in attending to the working of the steamer, for the Superintendent is very frequently absent during a fire. We also wish to know who is to work the steamer when the second officer is on leave, because the Superintendent has not the least notion of anything connected with one. No member of the Brigade has complained of insufficient pay, but one thing we may as well mention is that in case of a man being injured at a fire he has one-third of his pay stopped, and out of the remainder he has to pay his own doctor's expenses and keep himself, which we consider rather unjust. No arrangement whatever made by the Board will induce the men to withdraw their resignations or apply for the position of second officer except the resignation of the theoretical man himself.

We are, Sir, &E.,

TEN MEMBERS OF THE FIRE BRIGADE.

Adelaide, April 8.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Monday 11 April 1887, page 7

THE ADELAIDE FIRE BRIGADE.

Since Thursday last, when the announcement was first made, the resignation of the Adelaide Fire Brigade has provoked considerable discussion. In Saturday's Register appeared a letter from the firemen, giving their version of the case, and we have gleaned particulars which will enable the public to judge of the state of affairs from the Board's point of view. Owing to the resignation of Deputy Superintendent Shearing the Fire Brigades Board on Thursday advertised for applications for the position of second officer, in the following terms : — "Applicants must understand the use of steam fire-engines ; salary, £150 per annum and quarters ; married men preferred." The firemen noticing the advertisement, forthwith forwarded their resignations to the Superintendent. The resignations were submitted to the Board and accepted at a special meeting on the same day. Three or four reasons for resigning were given. One was that the action of the Board in inviting applications for a Deputy Superintendent, instead of selecting one of the senior firemen, gave them no chance of promotion; another was that the Deputy having been requested to resign, they had no confidence in the Superintendent, and considered that he was incompetent to work the Brigade ; and another reason was that the Superintendent had been intolerant to them. An order issued by the Superintendent was in force to the effect that in case of promotion the most eligible men would be selected from the permanent staff, and any fireman proving himself incapable of fulfilling satisfactorily the duties of his position would be disgraced. This order the men say was altogether ignored by the Superintendent, for in the advertisement it was mentioned that preference would be given to married men; but from official sources we learn that the

Board, who are the sole Directors — who alone appoint and dis-charge firemen, make rules, &c.— deemed it advisable to depart from the order for reasons which they considered satisfactory. The unpleasantness has all arisen during the last three months. The present Brigade was appointed in April, 1885. It comprised ten firemen and two officers (Superintendent Salter and his Deputy, Mr. R. Shearing). Up till the beginning of February last no complaint of any kind had been made, scarcely a harsh word had been used, officers and men worked friendly and contentedly, and discipline was well observed; in fact the management was so highly regarded that the firemen in December last presented the Superintendent with a testimonial, and on the occasion of his marriage in the same month the Board handed Mr. Salter a handsome present as a token of esteem. After the memorable Christmas Eve conflagration, however, the firemen unanimously complained to the Superintendent that they did "not care to work under such a man as Mr. Shearing," and demanded an enquiry into his conduct. An investigation was accordingly made by the Board, who exonerated Mr. Shearing. About February last Superintendent Salter was taken ill with typhoid fever, and, as he was unable to attend to his official duties Mr. Shearing was placed in charge of the Brigade. Mr. Salter went to the neighbouring colonies for rest, and was absent from South Australia for a couple of months. On his return he learnt that the Brigade had been irregularly conducted, and that the Board had convened a special meeting to hear charges preferred by a citizen against the Deputy Superintendent. The charges were considered substantiated, and Mr. Shearing at the Board's request resigned his position. According to Superintendent Salter, whose statement is verified by the Chairman of the Board (Mr. W. Cavenagh, J.P.), the men, as well as the Deputy Superintendent, allowed women to frequent the stations. This, of course, was a breach of the Brigade's rules, for an order was on March 19 issued by the Superintendent prohibiting the firemen from allowing women to enter the stations. The Superintendent had blamed the firemen for this practice, and it is alleged that from that time forward the men took offence. Mr. Salter returned from the other colonies little more than a week since, and he states that he was completely astounded at the state of affairs in relation to the Brigade. By both the Chairman of the Board and the Superintendent the men's resignation is attributed to Mr. Shearing's influence. Mr. Salter repudiates the charge of intolerance ; and as for the firemen's statement that Mr. Salter remarked, when he heard of the resignations, "That was what he had been working for for a considerable time," the Superintendent asserts— "The assertion was made by me to Mr. Shearing, charging him with the fact that in my opinion the resignation of the men was what he (Mr. Shearing) had been aiming at for some time." As to the remarks of the fire men, that they "have men who have served in the London Fire Brigade double the time the Superintendent has, and one who is perfectly competent to take charge of a steamer," Mr. Salter says — "I came to Adelaide from Sydney in April, 1885, to take charge of the Adelaide Fire Brigade, having previously been in the London Fire Brigade. I am senior to all the firemen in my previous position in the London Metropolitan Fire Brigade, No man who has been for any considerable time connected with that brigade leaves it without having attended the same number of fires as any other man in his station. The whole of the work, including office work, cleaning the brasswork about the stations, and other paraphernalia is done by the Brigade members. The whole of the time I was in the London Brigade I was located at two of the busiest stations in the metropolis—

viz., the head-quarters in Southwark and the Central Station of the Eastern District— at both of which steam fire-engines are in frequent use, and from headquarters sometimes as many as four steamers are attending fires at the same time. We got every attendance at fires, and some considerable experience must have been obtained in working the engines. In Sydney also I had to deal with three such engines. I have lately ascertained that one of my firemen has had experience in working steam fire-engines." From the advertisement it was inferred that as the Board hoped to have a "steamer" the second officer would be required to drive the engine. Mr. Salter explained to the men that such officer could not possibly in the fulfilment of his duties work an engine, but in the appointment the Board would consider it well for the second officer not to be ignorant of working it. The men, who are all single, have earned from £120 to £130 each per annum, and have never complained of insufficient salary. It is true, however, as the men state, that two thirds of a fireman's pay is only allowed in case of injury at a fire, and when ill through natural causes the fireman is allowed his full pay, and is required to find a substitute, and pay that substitute. The fireman has also to pay for medical attendance himself, but all the members of the brigade are expected to be associated with a Benefit Society. The firemen also complain of the accommodation provided for them at the stations. On the day before applications were invited for a second officer some of the men asked the Superintendent if married-men apartments would be allowed, as some of them entertained the idea of settling down in the Brigade. In reply the Superintendent hoped that the time was not far distant when extra accommodation would be provided for married men. The Board are now receiving applications for the vacant positions. They offer to permanent firemen, who must be single, wages at £2 per week and quarters. Mr. Shearing's time has already expired, and the firemen will leave the service at 6 p.m. on Thursday next. The Board meet on Wednesday next, when it is likely that they will select the new firemen. As a steam-engine will be provided if sufficient money is raised Mr. Salter intends to teach the brigade the working of the engine so that any one can undertake the duty in case of emergency. Intelligent men can be drilled into the use of the engine with a few lessons. There will of course be some difficulty in getting the men into proper training, but the Board and the Superintendent think that everything will work satisfactorily. The Board speak in high praise of Mr. Salter's ability as Superintendent. At the present time when the arrangements for extinguishing fires form such a theme for public discussion it will be interesting to add a few suggestions by an experienced man. Mr. R. Moore, who was Superintendent of the Adelaide Fire Brigade before the present Superintendent was appointed, called at our office on Saturday and stated that in his opinion only one fire station is really necessary for the city. At present there are two — the head station in Flinders-street and No. 2 station in Waymouth-street, besides two street stations. Mr. Moore thinks that if the head station, properly equipped and manned, occupied a more central position, say in King William-street or on North-terrace, a better outlook would be gained. Flinders-street station does occupy a prominent position in being in the centre of the metropolis, but to be in easy access to property and large and principal business houses North-terrace or King William-street would be a far better site. Mr. Moore does not recommend a watch-tower. Fires, he states, are generally discovered in the basement of a building, and before the man on the watchtower could see the flames the fire would have had a good hold of the place. For observing

fires in the suburbs within, say, an 8 or 10 miles radius of Adelaide, then a lookout tower might be useful. Mr. Moore approves of street fire alarms from all points of the city to the head station, especially the electric knob alarm.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Friday 15 April 1887, page 3

THE FIRE BRIGADE.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir—As the breach at present existing between the Superintendent of the Adelaide Fire Brigade (Mr. H. C. Salter) and his men, has provoked considerable discussion, will you kindly allow me space to correct some of the very loose statements which Mr. Salter has made to the Board, in reference to his service in the London Metropolitan Fire Brigade, which appeared in your issue of the 12th inst. As an ex-London fireman, stationed with Mr. Salter at head-quarters, Southwark, for some considerable time, I claim to know something of the working of that station, and also what part of that working devolved on Mr. Salter. I am aware that Mr. Salter's position as Superintendent debars him from communicating with the Press, consequently correspondence of this kind from an outsider might be considered unfair; still if he chooses to make statements and assertions which he knows will be eventually submitted to the public, he must expect public criticism on them, more particularly as several of those statements are not in accordance with facts. I have no personal feeling against Mr. Salter and, indeed, was agreeably surprised to hear of his appointment as Superintendent of the Adelaide Fire Brigade, but I am afraid I must "knock a hole" through his pretty little picture of the amount of practical knowledge of fire-extinguishing which he gained whilst at Southwark. As far as making out a fire report, Brigade expenditure, a return of fires during the year, and other clerical work connected with the Brigade goes, I have no doubt Mr. Salter has every qualification necessary, more especially as he has passed the very severe educational examination required by the London M.F.B. (consisting of reading, writing, keeping a petty cashbook, and making out a fire report). All this, of course, is very essential to the working of the Brigade, but it certainly would take a vast amount of it to extinguish a fire. Moreover, to become acquainted with all this or to successfully pass this examination it is not absolutely necessary for a man to attend a fire at all. Mr. Salter states that "no man leaves the London Fire Brigade without having attended the same number of fires as any other man in his station." Now, Sir, in the London Fire Brigade there are certain nominal offices, termed "special duties," to which a number of the men having the necessary qualifications are appointed, and for which they receive a fee of 3s. 6d. in addition to their pay as firemen. For instance, a first, second, third, or fourth class fireman might have a fair education; he would then be eligible for a "special duty" as a clerk at head-quarters, although he may not have had three months' experience as a fireman, or, in fact, may have never seen a fire except in the grate. The same would apply to men having an idea of carpenters' work, painting, repairing hose, &c. these would be eligible for "special duties" in the workshops. But, Sir; these duties necessarily prevent men holding them from attending fires during the day, and as they cannot sleep during the afternoon, as all those not otherwise engaged can, they are only nominally available for fires during the night, consequently their experience in real practical work is very limited. All the

time Mr. Salter was at head-quarters (nearly two years) he held one of these special offices or duties, which consisted in measuring the chests of candidates for the Brigade, filling up the order-book, and general clerical work of the station. Head-quarters certainly was one of the busiest stations, but not for Mr. Salter and other firemen in name only. As regards Mr. Salter's other station—No. 27, Commercial road East—I must bring to his recollection that this was a Superintendent station, and being such he could not have gained much practical experience there, inasmuch as a Superintendent station seldom turns out (except for a "home call") until all the other stations in that district have been turned out. I also was in that district for some time with Mr. Shearing, who doubtless can bear me out in this statement, When Mr. Salter was sent to a station where he would have had some practical work he immediately resigned, privately assigning as his reason for so doing, that "that station (Chandos-street, Strand) was something he was not used to." Mr. Salter says, "The cleaning of the brasswork, engines, &c., was done by members of the brigade." Quite true, Sir, but I should like to ask Mr. Salter how much help he contributed to such work. Does he forget the remark he made in the messroom the day he was leaving head-quarters to the effect that the duck jacket—supplied by the brigade for cleaning engines, brasswork, &c., in—"was bran new and had never been soiled," at the same time holding it up for our inspection ? His statement re brasswork-cleaning brings this very vividly to my recollection. I have worked side by side with Mr. Shearing and four other members of the A.F.B. at some of the largest fires in London, and although not attempting to champion their cause I still consider that they have been somewhat unfairly treated by the Superintendent, as no doubt the Board has been acting on his advice and relying on his practical experience. Mr. Salter says there was no trouble at either station until the beginning of February, 1887. I can assure Mr. Salter that nevertheless in June, 1886. two of his best men stationed with him told me "that if Mr. Shearing was to leave the brigade they would not stop with Mr. Salter in the brigade." I would suggest to Mr. Salter the advisability of being more guarded in his statements and also to remember that there is "A chiel amang ye takin' notes." I am, Sir, &c..

J. E. K. McGREGOR, Ex-Fireman L M.F.B,

Port Adelaide, April 13.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Friday 15 April 1887, page 3

Firemen's Dispute.

The members of the Adelaide Fire Brigade Board met at the head-station at 5 o'clock on Thursday afternoon, and finally passed the ten men recommended by the superintendent for the vacant positions in the brigade. At 6 o'clock the late members of the brigade were paid off by Mr. W. B. Wilkinson (secretary of the board), and they quietly dispersed. The superintendent immediately divided his new firemen into two staffs, dispatching five of them to No. 2 Station, Waymouth-street, and keeping five at the head station. The men who have been selected, have all been accustomed to discipline of one sort or another, either having been members or ex-members of the permanent and naval forces, men-of-wars-men, or men who have previously acted as firemen. They are a good stamp of men. Captain Warman, of the Norwood

Volunteer Brigade, took charge of No. 2 station on Thursday evening, having very kindly volunteered his services. Captain Reid, of the Hindmarsh Volunteer Brigade has kindly consented to do similar duty this evening, so that at both stations there will be an officer in charge. The members of St. Peter's Volunteer Brigade in addition to the members of the Norwood and Hindmarsh brigades, have signified their willingness to act in cases of emergency, and several remained in the vicinity of the stations on Thursday evening, and as efficient men are in charge of the Arcade and King William-street reels no fears as to the safety of the city need be entertained, Mr. Wilkinson made a thorough inspection of the stations and reels on Thursday.

South Australian Register (Adelaide, SA : 1839 - 1900), Thursday 6 October 1887, page 3

THE ADELAIDE FIRE BRIGADE DISPUTES.

TO THE EDITOR.

Sir— Having a few idle hours to spare I visited the well-accommodated reading rooms of Melbourne, and of course asked for your valuable papers, as I always took interest in them when in Adelaide. I was not surprised to see the continued disputes in the brigade, as I told Mr. Salter he would never keep men long after I left him, which has proved too true. He cannot work men properly, as it is the first time he has had the control over men, so it is excusable after all. Well, Mr. Editor, if you recollect the grand change in the brigade in April last, there was also a dispute then among the scavengers, and they stood out, and others were employed. The old saying is that new brooms sweep clean. Well, in that case they did not sweep clean enough, and they were glad to use the old experienced once again. So we shall see this summer what inexperienced firemen can do with the fire fiends, as I can vouch for a positive fact that the City of Adelaide is worse off now for protection from fires than ever it was. Mr. Salter knows very well that a man drilled by him for three weeks is not much use at a fire except to drag hose along, and men in the London Brigade are not allowed to attend a fire until they have had three months' drill. I suppose the members of the Adelaide Fire Brigade Board would like to have twelve men like Mr. Salter. Well, Sir, I must say if Adelaide possessed twelve such experienced men as Mr. Salter, in my rough calculation they would amount to about one solid amateur fireman. I also saw in one of your leading articles that a clear-out would be advisable. No doubt you are perfectly right, Mr. Editor, and the Board had better turn the plant over to the old brigade just until the summer months are over, then the public can rest contentedly when they retire for the night. I am also of the same opinion as the four men that re-signed of late that Mr. Salter contradicts everything they say. Well, I have known him a long time, and am not surprised at such a report. The cases should be thoroughly investigated, so that the public may see where the fault lays. I could tell them, if it was not encroaching on your valuable space, and I hope you won't be troubled with any large fires until your firemen are living together like a happy family again. I am still interested in your happy brigade.

I am, Sir, &c,

RONALD SHEARING, Late Deputy-Superintendent of A.F.B.

Smith-street, Fitzroy, Melbourne,

October 3.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Monday 28 November 1887, page 3

FIRE AT

Burford's Soap Factory.

Sad Death of one of Employees.

The greatest consternation prevailed among the employes of Messrs. W. H. Burford and Sons on Saturday at noon, when it was discovered that a portion of this well-known firm's soap factory in Sturt-street was on fire. But the alarm the men naturally felt at the possibility of the whole of the extensive premises being burned to the ground did not cause them to become bewildered, for they immediately set to work with a will to combat the fiery element. The hose was quickly brought to play on the flames, and the fire brigade, headed by the superintendant (Mr. Salter), being soon on the scene, the fire was speedily got under. Long before this, however, it was found that Richard Tucker, a young man, and one of the employes of the firm, had fallen a victim to the flames, or to the boiling stearine that escaped from a still. Tucker was one of the steadiest hands in the factory. He was about 21 years of age, and resided near the scene of his daily labors in Sturt street with his two sisters and a brother. Like many other fires the origin of this one appears to be shrouded in mystery. Theories are put forth to account for the outbreak, and it is thought that the still containing the boiling liquid burst without an explosion, that it then caught on fire, and that the unfortunate youth who was at the time attending to it was suddenly enveloped in flames and smoke, with the seething stearine pouring on to him. None of the men appeared to have noticed the fire at the exact moment it broke out, and for a short space, while the room was filled with smoke, they were not able to learn if Tucker was about the still. Directly the superintendent of the fire brigade arrived he ran up the steps that lead to the top of the still, and stretching out his hands they came in contact with the body of the deceased. Without a moment's hesitation Mr. Salter ran down the stairs, and gaining the fire reel returned with the jumping sheet, which he wrapped round the deceased's body, and then carried it below. Prior to this it was not known whether Tucker was dead or not, but when Mr. Salter reached the body a second time, he felt convinced that life was extinct. All that could be done then was to tenderly bear the remains away, and work on the fire with the hoses. The flames, which seemed to be fed by burning fat, rushed all along the roof of the building, which is on the ground floor, and it was a difficult matter to get them under. But at last the task was accomplished, and then the city coroner (Mr. T. Ward) arrived and made an examination of the building, afterwards proceeding to the morgue, whither the body had been conveyed.

As is generally known the Messrs. Burford took this large factory over from Mr. J. Tidmarsh, and since they did so they have greatly extended the works. The fire broke out on the ground floor, in which are four stills. The still that caught alight is in the south-east corner. It is made of copper and encased with bricks, and fed with fire and

steam. At first it was thought that an explosion had occurred, but none of the men seemed to have heard any noise, so that it was conjectured that either the still burst, and that the outpouring fat caused the conflagration, or that a fire started and caused the still to give way, and that it then took fire and the deceased was suffocated by the steam and smoke, and then burned to death by the hot stearine and the fire.

Mr. F. A. Bowen, who is employed in the office, and is a nephew of Mr. W. Burford, said, on being seen by a member of our staff who visited the works shortly after the occurrence—I was on the first floor just a little after 12 o'clock, when a man came to me and said, "There is a fire at the still." I ran to the spot at once, and saw that the men, who all rushed to aid, got out the hose and played on to the fire. There is a hose always on hand, and a water service running from the ground to the top floor so that in the case of an outbreak of fire it can be at once dealt with. The men soon got on our hose and reel, and managed to keep back the flames until the fire brigade reels, which were quickly on the spot, arrived. The moment I saw that our men had played on to the fire I went to the telephone and informed the head station of the occurrence. There seems to be no doubt that Richard Tucker was at the time of the outbreak on the top of the still or on the landing or platform of the still attending to some taps. The manager of the candle department (Mr. Marsh) was in the room close to the still about 10 minutes before the outbreak. After seeing Tucker and giving him some instructions he left, everything being all right, and proceeded to the top of the factory, where men are engaged making candles, During his brief absence something happened, but what I cannot say. Other men were at work on the same floor as the deceased, but unless they were looking at the deceased they would not have been able to see what took place. Something seemed to take fire on the outside of the still, and it is supposed that he was first suffocated by escaping steam or smoke, and then burned. When he was picked up he was quite dead. There is a fire under the still which is also supplied with steam in the ordinary way. As quickly as possible the body, which was lying on the landing with the head overhanging the brickwork, was brought down. The deceased's duty was to look after the still and to do other work. There are four stills in the factory, two made of copper and two of iron, the one at which the accident occurred being of copper.

The Superintendent of the Fire Brigade (Mr. H. E. Salter) said—As soon as we came in to the building with the hose some of the employés of the firm said there was a man up on the landing of the still. I immediately ran up the stairs, and stretching out my hands, placed them on the body of the deceased. I put my hand on bare flesh, the clothes having been burnt off. Thinking that there might be life in the body I ran down, and out to the fire reel, getting a jumping sheet with which to cover the body over and bring it down, arranging at the same time for a conveyance to take deceased to a doctor. For a moment we were driven back by clouds of smoke, but I quickly regained the body and secured it, bringing it down in the sheet. But I soon saw that life must have been extinct some time. The body was terribly burnt all over, so much so that it was impossible to recognise his features, and no one would have known him except by the shape of his body. As to the origin of the fire it is supposed that the fat escaped by the opening of the still. There seems to be little doubt that the fat did escape, as a most obnoxious effluvium arose from the fire, and it seemed to be the fat burning that set fire to the roof. It was a difficult fire to cope with, as the

burning fat kept shooting out, and it was that set the roof on fire. The hoses were at work half an hour altogether, by which time the fire was out, save a smouldering. Nothing could be done with the still, so we had the fire put out, and the steam shut off so as to allow it to cool. There did not appear to be any noise heard, so that it is supposition that there was an explosion.

The damage done to the building by the fire does not appear to be very serious, but until the still is examined it cannot be estimated. The brickwork surrounding the still was forced away, and when an inspection is made of the still it will be seen whether it had burst or not. It may be mentioned that the action of Mr. Salter in removing the body of the deceased, Mr. Tucker, was criticised by Inspector Sullivan, who was present soon after the fire started. According to what the inspector told Mr. Salter it would seem that the police have orders to leave bodies where they are found until after the city coroner has seen them, but in this case it would have been absurd for the superintendent of the fire brigade to have left the body when he first discovered it, as there was just a chance that life was not extinct. Besides no one will hardly deny that had Mr. Salter done so in this case it would have appeared like a case of gross inhumanity, as there was nothing to show that poor Tucker was dead. If this order were obeyed by the firemen they might come across a body in a fire of a man who was in-sensible, and if they waited until the coroner arrived the man would die without a doubt. Of course it is ridiculous to tell the firemen that unless they could prove beyond all doubt that the man was alive they had no right to remove him. Both Messrs. Burford Bros. visited the factory as soon as possible after the occurrence on Saturday, but as the body had been removed to the morgue and the city coroner had instructed the police to remain in charge of the building, nothing could be done by them. The sad death of Mr. Tucker cast a gloom over all the employes, by whom he was generally respected.

The following is a list of the insurances on Messrs. W. B. Burford & Sons' premises:— Cornwall, £1,000; Imperial, £1,000; Guardian, £1,000; Adelaide Marine, £1,000; Phoenix, £1,000; City of London, £1,000; North British, £1,000; Victoria, £500; National of Australasia, £500; South Australian, £1,000; National of New Zealand, £500; South British, £1,000; Standard, £250; Equitable of South Australia, £1000; Northern, £400; Colonial Mutual, £600=£12,750.

The city coroner commenced an inquest on the casualty on Sunday, at the Elephant and Castle Hotel, Mr. C. Skethaway being foreman of the jury:—Samuel Gutteridge deposed to being foreman at Messrs. Burford & Co.'s works. Tucker was a single man, about 22 years of age, and of very steady habits. He was what was known as a stillman, and his duties kept him in the stillhouse. At the time of the explosion the witness was not in the stillhouse, but went there immediately on hearing that an accident had happened. He found the place full of smoke from the burning of tallow. The witness gave further particulars referred to above, and the inquest was then adjourned to Tuesday morning.

The funeral of the deceased will take place to-day, when Messrs. Burford's factory will be closed.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Wednesday 30 November 1887, page 2

CORONER'S INQUEST.

THE EXPLOSION AT MESSRS BURFORD AND SONS' FACTORY.

The inquest on the explosion which occurred on the premises of Messrs. Burford and Sons on Saturday morning, by which one of the firm's workmen named Richard Tucker lost his life, was resumed at the Queen's Arms Hotel on Tuesday morning. Mr. W. Sketheway was chosen foreman of the Jury. The scene of the accident having been inspected the evidence was proceeded with. Mr. Yuill watched the case on behalf of some of the Insurance Companies. William Burford, a member of the firm, said he had just reached his home at Unley when a message came by telephone informing him of the fire only. When he left the factory the men were preparing to leave at 1 o'clock as usual. Deceased, who was a steady young man, had been engaged in the stillroom since he was 16 years of age, and he was perfectly capable of doing the work entrusted to him. Witness knew nothing of the death until he returned to the establishment. Had examined the still, which was good and in safe working order before the accident. The only opinion he could venture as to the cause of the explosion was that the pressure of steam was probably put on instead of being taken off. Deceased was a healthy and perfectly steady lad. The explosion was probably the cause of the fire which subsequently took place. Joseph Keith, fireman in the employ of the firm, stated that he saw Tucker alive on the top of the still about 12 o'clock. He was turning off the throttle valve, and as soon as he shut the valve the explosion took place. Witness was about 15 yards from the still at the time, and the report of the explosion was like that of a small fieldpiece. Flames immediately burst up, and witness saw nothing more of deceased until the body was brought down, as he was hidden from view by the thick smoke. Could give no opinion as to the cause of the explosion. By Jurors—The fire in No. 1 (deceased's) Still was drawn previous to the accident. By Inspector Bee—On noticing the flames coming from the still called deceased's attention to the fact, and he then went to the valve to turn it. The explosion followed immediately. Did not see him alive afterwards. Mr. Burford here explained, with the permission of the Coroner, that there was a constant flow of steam into the still during the process of distillation, and while the throttle valve was open there was no pressure in the still. The closing of the valve would stop the outflow of distillation, and cause a pressure at once on the still. The insurances, as stated in that morning's newspaper, were correct, the total being £12,752. By Mr. Yuill—Judging from Keith's evidence the cause of the fire at the front door was a small leak, which was the commencement of the explosion, and which would have done no harm without a pressure of steam upon the still, because the stearine on leaking out would have been consumed as fast as it escaped, and would have caused no damage. Charles Kerr, assistant at No. 1 Still, said he was working with deceased about two minutes before the explosion, but Tucker was on the top of the still, whilst witness was on the ground floor. Observed no fire coming from any of the small doors, but directly the explosion took place flames burst out and reached the roof. Deceased said as he was going up the steps to the still that he was going to "blow out," which meant that he intended transferring some of the material from No. 1 Still into No. 2. About three minutes later the explosion took place. Saw the flames burst out, and immediately ran for the hose. It never occurred to the witness that Tucker remained on the still. He thought deceased had probably escaped, but heard

some time later of his death. Dr. Poulton deposed to having on Sunday examined the body, which had been subjected to great heat and flames. Believed the cause of death was asphyxia from combustion of some material which enveloped him. Death was probably almost instantaneous. Charles Baker, employed in the factory, gave unimportant testimony. Superintendent Salter, of the Fire Brigade, deposed to having been called at 12.9 p.m. to the fire. The reels went off as smartly as possible and got to work. The fire was in the roof and still, but in about ten minutes it was under control. Mr. Salter then related the circumstances connected with the finding and removal of the body as given in Tuesday's Register. The Jury again inspected the still, the Manager in the meantime having had a portion of the masonry surrounding it removed, and it was discovered that a very thick copper-plate about 30 inches by 24 inches in extent had been blown out of the centre of the still bottom. The tallow was therefore able to flow into the furnace. James Gill, a grocer, was delivering goods in the neighbourhood of Burford's Factory at about noon on Saturday. Heard a loud noise, and then saw smoke rising. Gave the alarm to the Waymouth-street reel, and directed it to the factory. Mr. Salter said to me, "I want this dray." At first refused to accede to his request, but he said he must have it to put in a man who had been badly scalded. The goods were taken from my cart and the body removed in it. Did not receive orders to take the body to a doctor. The body was removed from my dray to the ambulance trap, which was about an hour coming. Samuel Guttridge, recalled, said that since his last examination he had viewed the scene of the accident, and had broken up the still to enable the Jurors to see where the fire had originated. The metal seemed to be burnt a great deal. There was a little leakage near the rivets round the bottom. The fire broke out, he believed, from this leak. Deceased to a certain extent would be responsible for the leakage. The management of the still required great experience. Did not think deceased was competent to manage it. Deceased, however, was under a manager (Mr. Marsh), from whom he took his order. The still was liable to leakage at any time. Deceased could not be blamed for the leak. He probably shut the throttle valve, which increased the intensity of the steam. Some one shut all the valves after the accident. Was not aware that the fire had been on for nine days. The fire was drawn every batch, which took about 12 hours. Believed the copper was soft and warm, and the pressure blew the body out. There were always two or three men to manage the still. If there was no defect in the bottom the pressure would not have burst it, and the accident would not have occurred. It was customary to inspect the boilers. It was about a fortnight since the vessel was cleaned out. It might get bad in a day. Believed Martin Nelson inspected the boiler last, Nelson was not an engineer. If there had been a leakage in the still his attention should have been called to it. Was not aware that there was a leakage on Friday last. By Mr. Yuill—Am not aware that deceased knew the leakage was there. He accounted for the cracks in the bottom of the still through wear and tear. The force of steam caused the fire. By Mr. Bee—The boiler was put up about 1881 or 1882. There had been a leakage before, but not in the same place. Henry Marsh, manager of the stearine department of Burford's Factory, knew deceased as a competent and trustworthy man. Could not account for the explosion. Believed that when deceased closed the throttle valve from some cause he could not explain she failed to lift the bottom out of the blowpipe, and consequently the pressure was directed against the plates, which caused the explosion. The closing of the valves

after the accident was to his action for precautionary measures. By the Foreman— Did not think the leak had anything to do with the accident. The two valves between the two stills were both open. By Mr. Bee—Knew of the leakage about two days prior to the accident. The boilers were inspected about every four weeks. Inspected them on November 14. Had been connected with the stearine and soap business for about thirteen years. Had been at Burford's for about nine months. Martin Neilson, a stillman at Burford's, was working on the night preceding the accident. When leaving in the morning told deceased there was 5 tons of tallow in the still. Cautioned him. Knew there was a little leak in the still, but when the copper got hot leaks generally closed up. Police-constable Thomas Walker thought the ambulance wagon arrived in about twenty-five minutes from the time the body was removed into the grocer's cart. Mr. Ward summed up shortly. If he had to give the verdict he would say that the deceased came to his death through his own negligence. He had catechised Mr. Salter somewhat closely ; but when he saw Mr. Salter evidently for some reason or other trying to fence the questions he was bound to compel him to answer them. The Jury found that the deceased came to his death by the explosion of the stearine still at Burford's Factory, and that there is no blame attachable to any one. The foreman mentioned that some of the Jurymen thought there should be a Government Inspector of Boilers.

South Australian Weekly Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1881 - 1889), Saturday 10 December 1887, page 11

The Week.

The Superintendent of Fire Brigades has received a letter dated Belfast, Ireland, November 3, 1887, from the brother of the late John A. H. Gardner, who met his death at the Academy fire in December last, from which the following is an extract: — "I now on behalf of my mother and other relatives desire to tender you and those brave men, my brother's comrades, and also to the citizens of Adelaide, our heartfelt gratitude for the sympathy and respect you showed at the time the sad accident occurred ; we also wish to return our undying gratitude for the substantial memorials that you have erected to his memory. I think the citizens of Adelaide have cause to be proud of their munificence, and we beg to tender them through you an expression of our heartfelt thanks and deep appreciation of their kindness. I daresay you will think me very dilatory in returning these our thanks, but I have only just returned home after a long absence."