

Adelaide Fire Brigade 1911

Daily Herald (Adelaide, SA : 1910 - 1924), Tuesday 3 January 1911, page 4

FALSE FIRE ALARM.

The metropolitan fire brigade received a call to Mellor Brothers, Franklin street, at 9.45 o'clock on Monday night, but the alarm proved a false one.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Monday 9 January 1911, page 1

FALSE ALARM OF FIRE.

About 9.26 a.m. on Monday the Metropolitan Fire Brigade received a call from Grote-street, and responded promptly. The firemen found the alarm to be a false one, having been caused by men working on the telegraph line having crossed the wires.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Wednesday 18 January 1911, page 9

THE FIRE AT ITS HEIGHT.



A REMARKABLE PICTURE. Krischock photo

The above picture was secured by "The Advertiser" photographer while the fire was at its fiercest, It will be observed that it illuminated Hindley-street almost as brightly as in full

daylight. This is one of the most remarkable fire photographs ever secured, and it gives an admirable idea of the scene during the progress of the outbreak.

LARGE CITY FIRE.

HINDLEY-STREET ESTABLISHMENT GUTTED.

THOUSANDS OF POUNDS DAMAGE.

SIXTY MEN THROWN OUT OF WORK.

Shortly after 8 o'clock on Tuesday night the greater portion of the second and third floors of the premises occupied by E. Fischer & Sons, saddlers and importers, who conducted their business at the corner of Hindley-street and Blyth-lane, was gutted by fire. It is impossible at present to estimate the damage to the stock and plant, but Mr. Fischer states that it is covered by an insurance of £10,000 in the Phoenix, Atlas, and Sun offices. Fire and water have also destroyed most of the building.

Giving the Alarm.

The fire was first noticed by S. Grivell, an employe of L. Conrad & Co., who whilst passing down Blyth-lane, observed flames issuing from a shed at the rear of the premises. He at once gave the alarm, and shortly afterwards Superintendent Rickwood, with a large contingent of men and appliances, had arrived. The western portion of the second and third floors was found to be enveloped in flames and smoke, and it was at once apparent that the premises were doomed to destruction. By means of a lift shaft the flames, after consuming the straw in the shed, had leapt to the second and third floors, and igniting the inflammable material, quickly spread from end to end of the building. Dense clouds of smoke were issuing from the windows. The superintendent adherence decided to concentrate his attention on the rooms in the eastern portion of Messrs. Fischer's premises. Attracted by the volume of smoke and flame which every now, and again belched forth from the windows, a large crowd soon congregated in the vicinity of the building, but the approaches to it were kept clear by an efficient body of police. After battling with the flames for some time the firemen got the fire well under control, and at 10.30 it had been almost extinguished.

The Buildings.

The buildings, which are owned by Mr. Thomas Playford, are situated at the western end of a block on the northern side of rundle-ssstreet. They are three storeys high, with a depth to Blyth-lane of 90 ft., and are constructed chiefly of stone and brick. On the ground floor is Fischers' warehouse, a shop, occupied by W. S. Wood, clothier and tailor (at the rear of which are the premises of an upholsterer). All space on the second and third floors is used by the firm in the manufacture of articles of saddlery and as a storeroom for goods, such as rugs and collars. Woods' premises were saved, but much of his stock has been severely damaged by water. It is insured with the London, Liverpool, and Globe Company for £600.

Coffee Palace in Danger.

The flames spread rapidly through the top floor of the western wing of the building about 9 o'clock and leapt menacingly through the windows and apertures opening into Blyth-lane, separating the burning building from Stevens' Coffee Palace. The firemen directed a powerful jet of water against the flames, but a second danger arose from the sparks, which floated down into the street. The firefighters increased their vigilance, and after a struggle succeeded in diverting the course of the flames. Another lane runs east and west at the rear of the building, and several business establishments are scattered around in the vicinity, but thanks to the watchfulness of the men with the hose" these remained unscathed.

Sixty Employees Affected.

Mr. E. Fischer, when interviewed, stated that about 60 men would be thrown out of work as a result of the fire. "There will, of course, be a lot of clearing up to do," he said, "and it is probable that the men will soon be able to obtain plenty of work. The fire could not have occurred at a worse time. We have an abundance of large orders in hand, and business will be seriously restricted. There is the possibility of the eastern wing of the factory being practically left intact, and if such is the case greater facilities will be given for disposing of the orders. Our customers have little to fear, as we shall do our utmost to supply their wants with dispatch." The books were all saved. Mr. Fischer stated that they were safely stowed within two large safes.

The Last to Leave.

There was no caretaker on the premises, and as the sweeping out is done in the morning no one enters the building after it is closed in the evening. Mr. W. J. Hicks, one of the managing directors, was the last to leave the building on Tuesday. Mr. E. Fischer, jun., left about 6.15 p.m., and Mr. Hicks was then in his office, which is some distance from the portion of the premises where the fire is said to have broken out. The firm has been established in Adelaide for 26 years, and during the last 12 years business has been carried on in the premises which have been demolished. It is a limited company, and the managing directors are Mr. E. Fischer, sen., Mr. E. Fischer, jun., and Mr. W. J. Hicks.

Superintendent Rickwood's Statement.

When interviewed shortly after midnight Superintendent Rickwood stated that he received a call at 8.22 from the Bank-street fire alarm. All appliances at the head station were turned out, and later out-stations were summoned. On arrival, he continued, "I found the premises well alight. The upper floors were burning from end to end, and the ground floor of the back portion was also well alight. It seemed apparent that the flames, which originated in the rear rooms on the ground floor, had spread to the top floor by means of a lift shaft. We immediately got to work with four lines of hose, and found a good pressure of water. Later brought into requisition four more lines of hose. could see that the western portion was doomed to destruction, and devoted all attention towards preventing the spread of the fire. After half an hour's fighting we had checked the flames."

Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1895 - 1954), Saturday 21 January 1911, page 44

FIRE IN ADELAIDE.

HINDLEY-STREET ESTABLISHMENT GUTTED.

THOUSANDS OF POUNDS DAMAGE.

Shortly after 8 o'clock on Tuesday night the greater portion of the second and third floors of the premises occupied by E. Fischer & Sons, saddlers and importers, who conducted their business at the corner of Hindley-street and Blyth-lane, was gutted by fire. It is impossible at present to estimate the damage to the stock and plant, but Mr. Fischer states that it is covered by an insurance of £10,000 in the Phoenix, Atlas, and Sun offices. Fire and water have also destroyed most of the building. Giving the Alarm. The fire was first noticed by S. Grivell, an employe of L. Conrad & Co., who whilst passing down Blyth-lane, observed flames issuing from a shed at the rear of the premises. He at once gave the alarm, and shortly afterwards Superintendent Rick-wood, with a large contingent of men and appliances, had arrived. The western portion of the second and third floors was found to be enveloped in flames and smoke, and it was at once apparent that the premises were doomed to destruction. By means of a lift shaft the flames, after consuming the straw in the shed, had leapt to the second and third floors, and igniting the inflammable material, quickly spread from end to end of the building. Dense clouds of smoke were issuing from the windows. The superintendent at once decided to concentrate his attention on the rooms in the eastern portion of Messrs. Fischer's premises. Attracted by the volume of smoke and flame which every now and again belched forth from the windows, a large crowd soon congregated in the

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Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1895 - 1954), Saturday 21 January 1911, page 32

FIRE IN ADELAIDE.



The above picture was secured by "The Chronicle" photographer while the fire was at its fiercest. It will be observed that it illuminated Hindley-street almost as brightly as in full daylight. This is one of the most remarkable fire photographs ever secured, and it gives an admirable idea of the scene during the progress of the outbreak. (See page 44.) H. Krischock, photo.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Thursday 26 January 1911, page 6

OUTSIDE THE PROTECTED AREA.

The blaze at Magill on Wednesday further emphasized the risk run by residents in areas under district councils which do not pay for fire protection. Although there is no necessity for the brigades to attend fires outside the protected area, the superintendent invariably renders whatever assistance is possible, but the danger of such action is apparent. On Wednesday the Norwood Brigade attended a fire at Magill, and it was necessary to send a relief force to that station from Adelaide until the brigade returned. Adelaide was therefore without the services of a reel and five men for five hours on Wednesday, and had a big conflagration broken out in the city those who pay for protection against fire would have had the curious spectacle of part of their protection, which is small enough compared with Melbourne and Sydney, away saving the property of householders who do not contribute a penny toward the upkeep of the brigade. Omitting Port Adelaide the only fire stations in the metropolitan area are at Wake-field street, Norwood, and Unley, and the portions they protect are intersected by large areas of property not similarly guarded because the councils concerned do not care to pay for the privilege, but are quick to request assistance when they are in trouble. Three or four more stations would adequately safeguard a radius of four miles all round the city, but many suburban administrators still prefer to rely on the volunteer brigades, which, while doing useful service, are unable always to be on the spot at once—the be-all and end-all of successful fire fighting. Should a big fire ever occur among protected properties while

brigades are away helping the coun-cils who do not pay it is conceivable that some awkward questions might be asked. A system of complete protection means that one station would be able to back up another when a fire was in progress by sending protection to the station whose men had gone out. At present when a brigade attends a fire in an unprotected area the person on whose property it oc-curs is charged for attendance according to the schedule rates. There is no obligation on the part of the brigade, however, to attend such fires.

Narracoorte Herald (SA : 1875 - 1954), Friday 27 January 1911, page 2

TELEGRAMS

(From our own Correspondent.)

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Adelaide, January 28.

A BIG BLAZE PREVENTED.

As Mr. William Schultz was passing the premises of Robert Harper & Co. in Grenfell-street on Wednesday evening he noticed smoke issuing from them, and he at once rang the fire alarm. The brigade was on the spot at once, and they found the supports of a large tray used for melting honey alight. The fire was speedily arrested in its progress. The Brigade Superintendent said it was one of the most fortunate saves he had seen.

Daily Herald (Adelaide, SA : 1910 - 1924), Saturday 28 January 1911, page 3

Metropolitan Brigade.

ITS HISTORY AND PROGRESS

SPLENDID ORGANISATION.

NAVAL EXACTNESS INSISTED UPON

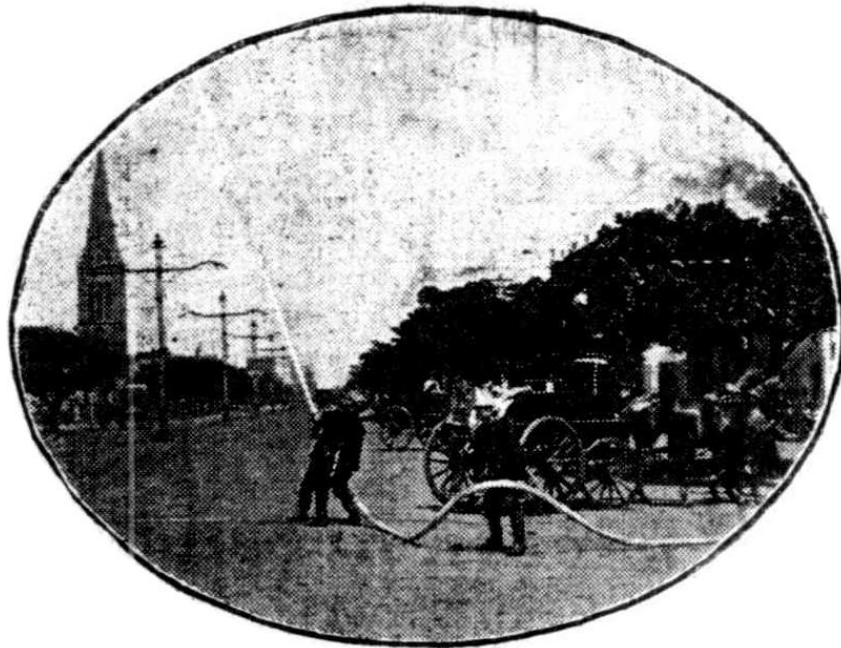
A visit to the Adelaide Fire Brigade station is a treat to any ordinary citizen, who knows nothing of the firefighters' routine. The alertness and efficiency of the helmetted members of the brigade when combatting a conflagration are matters with which the general public are familiar, but beyond the Titanic struggles made in the midst of fire and water, little is generally known of the daily duties of each member. Entering the establishment in Wakefield street one is struck by the neatness, cleanliness, and ship-shape condition of everything. "Shipshape" is an appropriate expression in this connection, because naval discipline is maintained, a naval officer is in command, naval routine is strictly observed, and the visitor when inside the fire station may without any stretch of imagination fancy himself on the quarterdeck of a man-of-war. The men are all dressed in smart working costumes; the engines and other apparatus are scrupulously clean and shining; the brasswork is polished until it reflects with the accuracy of a mirror; everything is in its exact place, and the duties are performed with regularity, promptness, and dispatch. No dust or dirt is permitted to linger either inside or outside the station, each man is always at his proper post, and when occasion arises in the twinkling of an eye men and machines are sent at express speed to cope with an outbreak of fire.

Superintendent Rickwood, the officer in charge, is a lieutenant of the navy, on the unattached list. He took over the command four years ago, but has for many years been associated with fire brigades and life-saving appliances. For twelve years he was attached to the Royal Navy, serving three years in the Mediterranean, four on the Australian Station, two on the China Station, and three with the home fleet in the British Channel. Subsequently Lieutenant Rickwood was in charge of lifesaving appliances and stations in New South Wales, controlling 20 depots along the coast. He was also instructor of officers in the New South Wales naval forces. It is usually the case that a naval officer, whether on the retired or unattached list, is placed in charge of fire brigade stations in large cities, his naval discipline and knowledge of the necessity for competency, promptitude, and exactness aptly qualifying him for the

responsible position. In London, there have been four naval officers in succession placed in command of the metropolitan brigades, and at the present time Lieutenant Wells, R.N., is chief officer.

Chat with Lieutenant Rickwood.

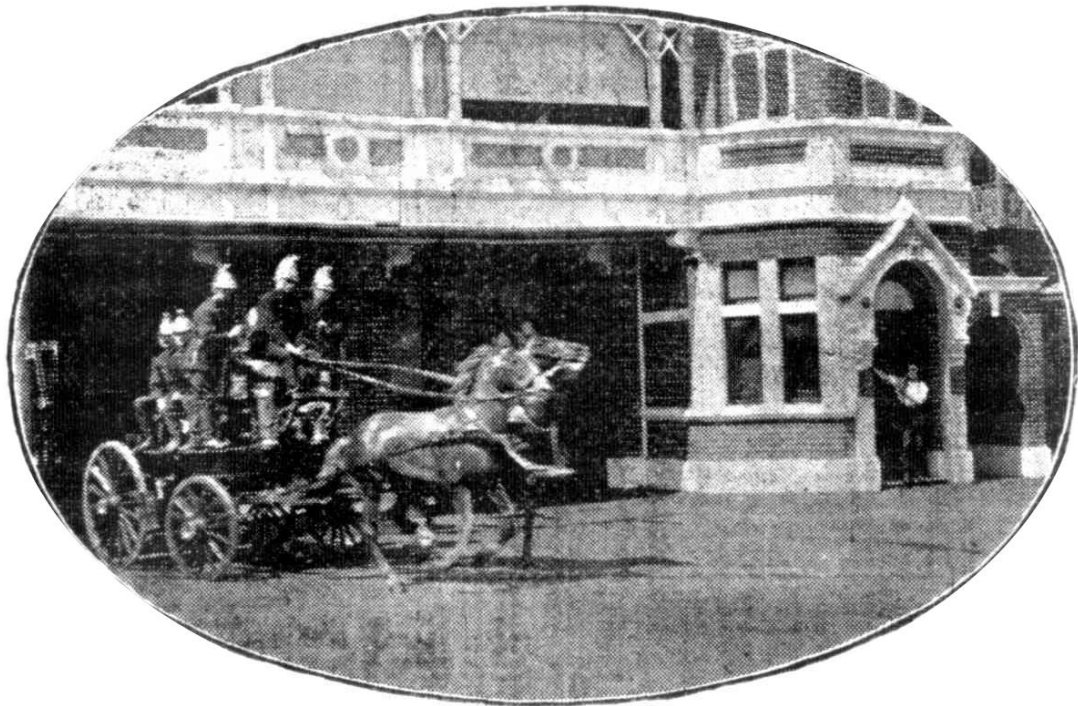
Like most naval officers Lieutenant Rickwood does not care about saying any thing in praise of himself or his work, but it is easy to see that he is an officer who knows his business, is held in great respect by the men, and is sharp as a needle where duty is concerned. In the course of a brief chat with "The Daily Herald" reporter, the Lieutenant could be induced to say little respecting himself, and when asked personal questions deftly changed the subject. His deputy is Mr.



GETTING TO WORK. WATER ON.



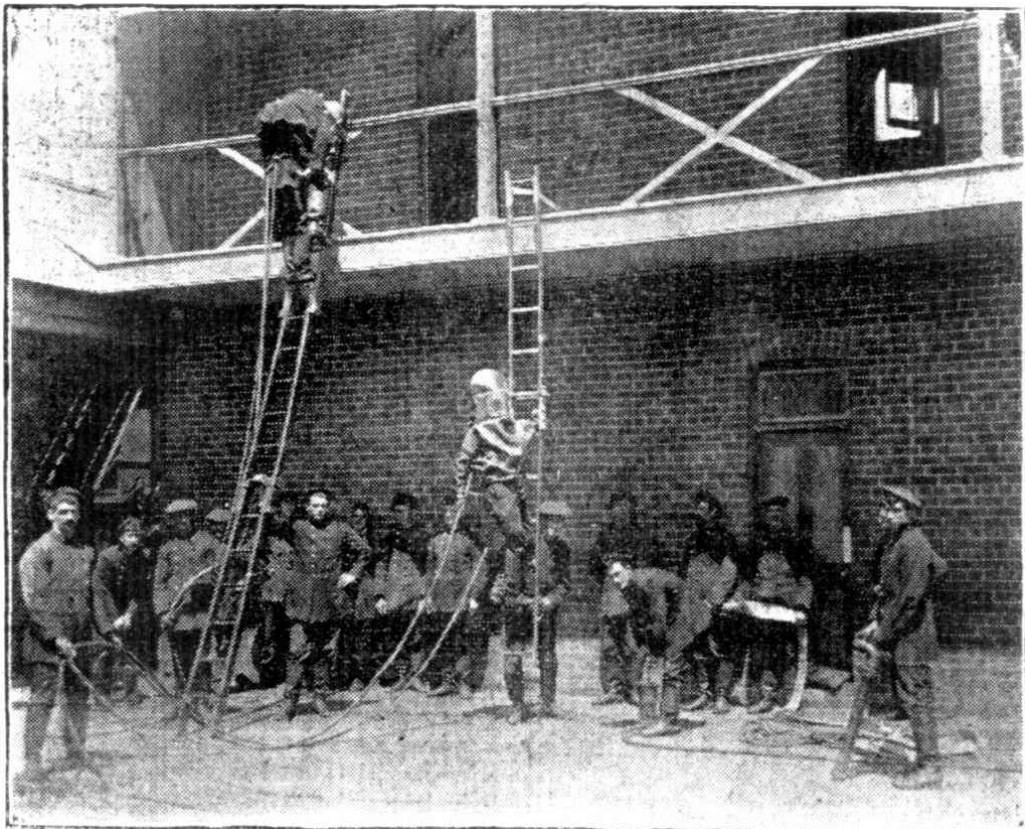
RESCUE BY LINE.



FIRE CALL. LEAVING STATION.

J. E. Dickie, an experienced fire fighter, who has been for 18 years connected with South Australian fire brigades, and previously to coming here was associated with the London brigades.

Speaking of the members of the brigade generally Lieutenant Rickwood said —"The work of the department is proceeding as smoothly as possible, and the class of men employed are a credit to any brigade in the world. The conditions of service have been improved by the board, in order to hold out an inducement for the men to remain. The pay has been increased and six additional men have been placed on the staff since January 1. There are altogether 86 permanent fire brigade employes (counting officers and all) and seven auxiliary hands, engaged in South Australia. Of these there are 55 at the metropolitan station, 20 at Port Adelaide and the Semaphore, and the balance distributed through the suburban and country stations. The men start at 6/6 per day, counting seven days to the week, and receive an increase of 6d. per day at the end of every year, until they reach the pay of 8/ as senior firemen. Assistant station officers receive 8/6 per day and foremen 9/6 and 10/." "The men," continued Lieutenant Rick-wood, "live like fighting cocks. They contribute so much per week towards their meals, all meals being provided and cooked for them on the premises, sleeping accommodation and beddings are provided free, as also are uniforms. They are insured against accident or death, and each man contributes 1/ per week, and the board another 1/ per week, to-



RESCUE WORK—WITH SMOKE APPARATUS.

wards a superannuation fund for the benefit of the firemen. The retiring age is 60, and then the employe receives his share out of the fund.

"The main duty of a fire brigade officer in connection with his staff is to see that each man is kept physically fit to undertake the most strenuous duty. For that purpose there is a gymnasium at the station, in which the men are constantly practising and keeping their

muscles and health in order. They must be in perfect trim and as hard as nails. They are constantly on duty day and night."

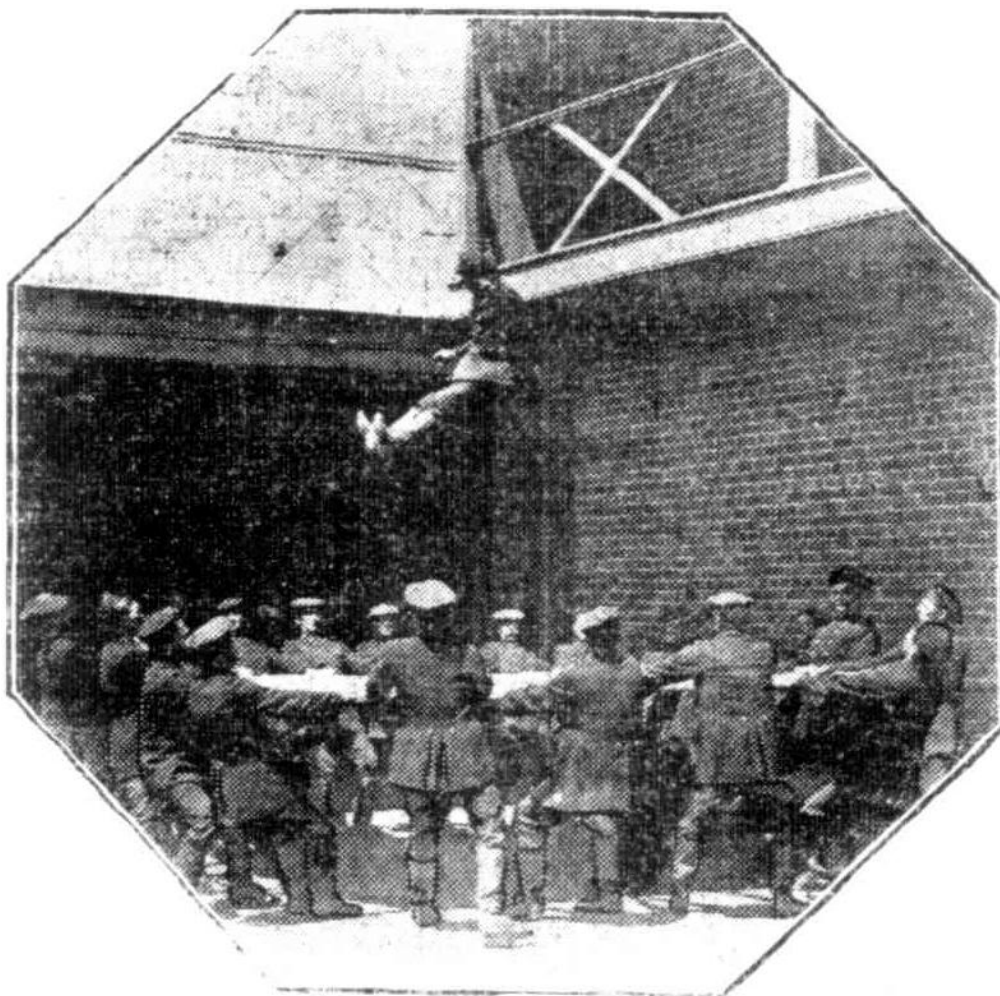
"How can they sleep if they are on duty." the pressman queried. "The best way they can," responded the lieutenant. They are placed on regular shifts, the same as on board a man of war, and when one set of men go to bed they are not off duty, because their uniforms are lying handy, and the first sound of the alarm bell turns them out fully dressed and in readiness for anything. The turn out only takes a few seconds of time. Whether a fireman be asleep or taking a meal it is all the same, because he is on duty at every emergency. They are a very small, capable body of men."

Fire and Accidents.

Superintendent Rickwood thinks that during the last two months there has been something approaching a record as regards the number of fires in Adelaide. In that period the brigade has been called out to serious fires at Bagshaw's, Gender's Buildings, Singer's Sewing Machine Depot, Fisher's (saddler's), and Leaver's, in Rundle street. These all occurred in busy thoroughfares, and might have had much more disastrous terminations had there been an insufficiency of water, or any waste time in dealing with them. The accidents to firemen had not been of a serious nature, but the lieutenant stated that the men were always getting slightly injured in the performance of their duties. Several men had met with mishaps at the fires mentioned, but the injuries were not of sufficient importance to be reported officially.

A PEEP INTO HISTORY.

Before going any further in respect to present day conditions, it is as well to take a glimpse at the past. The Adelaide Fire Brigade was established in December, 1859. Arthur John Baker accepted an offer made by the fire insurance companies through Mr. H. Scott to organise the scheme. This was only the work of a few months, and Mr. Baker was appointed superintendent of fire brigades. He drew up rules and regulations for the service, and drafted a short Bill, which was passed by Parliament and assented to by the then Governor (Sir Dominick Daly) on October 21, 1862. The first superintendent held office for 23 years, and during that period fire brigades were established in country towns. The head sta-



SHOWING USE OF JUMPING SHEET.



AT THE HYDRANT.

tion was formerly in Flinders Street and reels were also located at Rundle street, Hindley street west, and Archer street. The Wakefield street station was occupied at the latter end of 1892. Lord Kintore having laid the foundation stone on April 27 of that year. There are now 13 fire brigade stations in South Australia. Outside of the metropolis there are brigades in full working order at North Adelaide, Norwood, Unley, Port Adelaide, Semaphore, Port Pirie, Gawler, Kapunda, Moonta, Kadina, Port Augusta, and a fire float to protect the valuable frontages on the Port Adelaide River. The controlling board comprises Messrs. W. D. Ponder, M.P., and F. C. Krichauff (nominated by the Government), R. A. Paxton and W. Campbell (insurance companies), Coun- [*] and J. H. Cooke (suburban and country corporations), with Mr. F. W. Bristowe (secretary).

AN EFFECTIVE PLANT.

Every effort has been made to keep up an extensive and most modern plant at all the stations. The head stations, according to particulars furnished by lieutenant Rickwood, is now equipped with a motor fire engine, three steamers, two reels, 11 horses, and 15,000 ft. of hose, besides chemical extinguishers, hand-pumps, scaling and escape ladders, curricule escape, smoke helmets, jumping sheets, and salvage gear. The biggest steamer has a capacity of 650 gallons a minute, and could wash the face of the G.P.O. clock if the dial was 90 ft. nearer the sky. The fire float is capable of delivering 750 gallons a minute, and can throw the water 212 ft. into the air, or 20 ft. higher than the steamer. It has pumped water at a pressure of 170 lb., and delivered two good jets of water half a mile away.

There is power behind those feats. Adelaide's petrol motor can lift 400 gallons a minute, and is ever ready for immediate action. Turn the handle, slip in the clutch, and the pump is at work. The steamers are a good second. By the time the horses gallop from the station to Rundle street the gauges show sufficient steam to get to business. The fate of a building is generally decided within the first few minutes after the alarm is sounded. There is no such thing as unreadiness or delay. The number of calls grows with the constantly increasing risks. In 1889 there were 49 calls. In 1899 the total was 163, while last year it jumped to 277. Of the last mentioned 42 were classified a malicious false alarms; but in 1908 there were 86. Adelaide received 118 calls in 1909, and 50 of them were to fires, exclusive of 20 chimney, grass, and rubbish blazes. The properties at which fires actually occurred last year were valued at a little over £200,000, and the estimated damage done was under £12,000 worth. Below is given a comparative statement relating to the Australian capitals. The capital value of the property is based upon a revenue of 5 per cent, on the annual value:—

	Value £.	Population.	Staff.	Upkeep £.
Adelaide . .	22,762,000	178,300	43	12,000
Brisbane . .	16,000,000	135,600	41	6500
Hobart . . .	5,847,000	40,326	45	1,000
Melbourne.	107,497,000	538,000	382	57,300
Perth . . .	4,509,000	50,380	43	9,300
Sydney . .	123,135,000	577,000	481	64,800

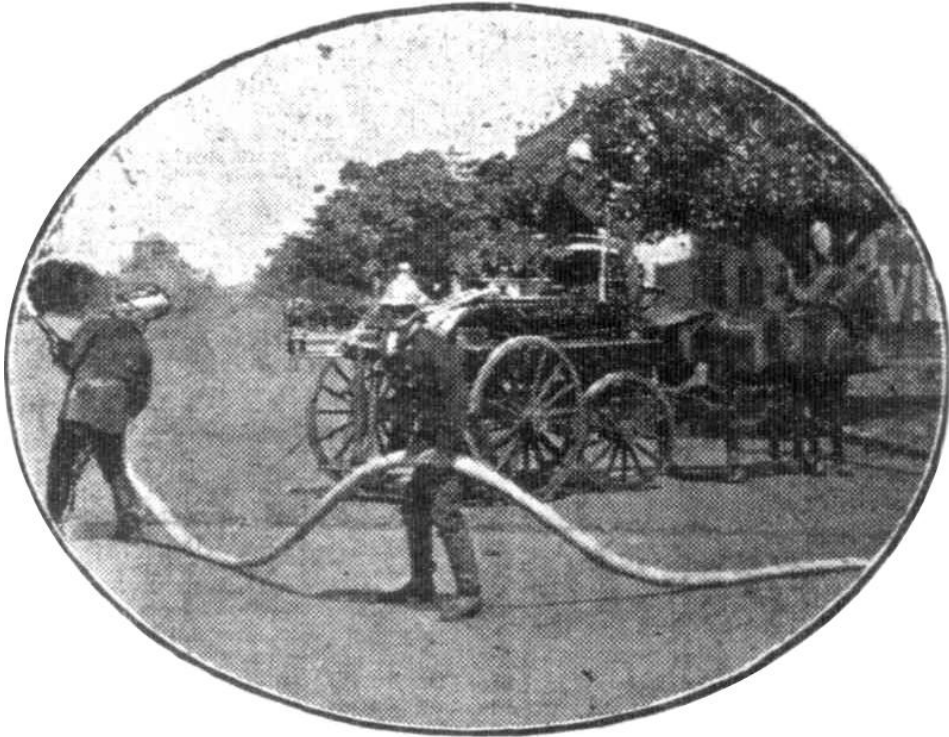
A glance at our illustrations will show how the "handy men" at the metropolitan station employ their time, when no fire is blazing, in the endeavor to keep themselves perfect in various necessary physical exercises.

READY, AYE, READY.

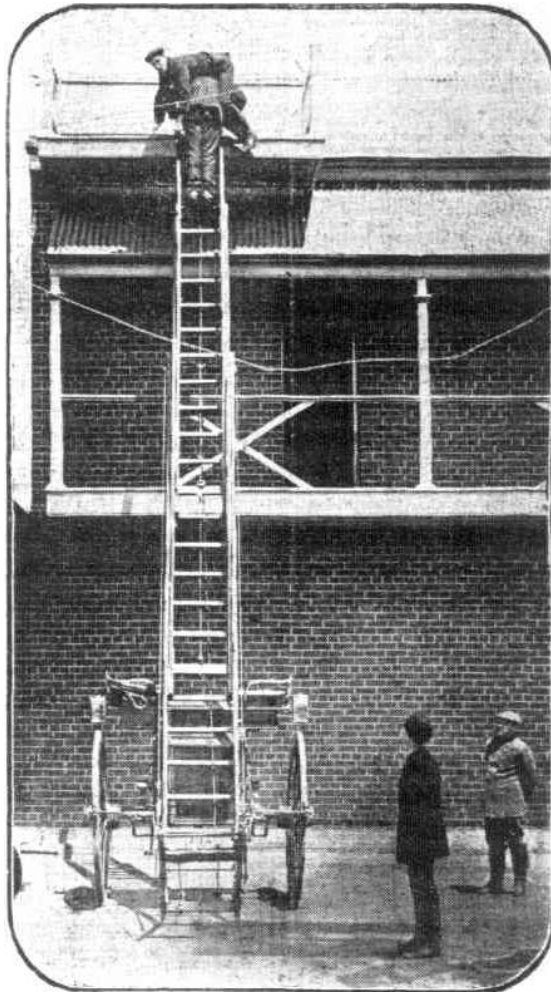
Something has already been said respecting the efficiency of the firemen, their rates of pay, and the strict discipline maintained. However, the following additional information, given by the officials some time ago, is just as accurate as it was then, and conveys a more detailed impression of fire brigade life. The brigade hand has no liberty excepting when each eighth day brings him 24 hours' leave. But the leave man has to hurry back to work should a big fire

occur. Says one gentleman who is familiar with the working of the institution:—"Ordinarily the brigade man can not so much as cross the road from the station without the fact being duly recorded in the occurrence book. Working or sleeping, he is ever under the bells and ever ready at their first imperious clanging to give instant obedience. On an off day down the street the sound of an electric bell will make him start—so great is the tension, and this is no less marked in the horses. Open the stable doors and they will deign little more than a passing glance. Touch a bell and they are all agog to dash to their posts. The effect is magical, but it is essential to efficiency.

Laughable in the extreme are some of the incidents recorded of firemen aroused from their slumbers. Perhaps the best relates to one who thought promptitude more important, than his nether garments, and who turned out clad only in helmet and tunic. Fortunately the night was dark and the summons was not of sufficient importance to require him to dismount. The conditions of the service are undoubtedly not devoid of monotony. Only by retaining the men can efficiency be maintained and recognising this the Fire Brigades Board does everything possible to make the quarters attractive. Some of the firemen have 20 odd years of service behind them, and Superintendent Rickwood says there are more first-class men in the brigade now than there have ever been. Tennis is a popular game, for it provides recreation and keeps the men fit. The public demonstrations which are frequently given combine business with pleasure. These shows consist of the ordinary round, but the presence of the spectators is a stimulus for the men to display to advantage exactly what they are capable of. Nothing is anticipated. The turnout is made from "scratch," and the ladder, smoke jackets, escapading and rescue work are all done by the men according to the daily change. "Fake" shows for effect find no place with Superintendent Rickwood. They are handy men, these firemen. All the smithing and carpentering is done by them, and they have lately shown their skill as builders by adding another brick storey of six rooms and a balcony to the men's quarters. A peasing variety has been introduced by the formation of a dramatic company, which occasionally varies the monotony by entertainments that are enjoyed. Taking it all round fire brigade life consists of a perpetual performance of duty, and even the recreations and physical exercises are portion of the system which keeps the men mentally and physically in a condition that renders them fit for any emergency. The life is not all "beer and skittles;" it has many dangers, and is held together by iron-bound discipline. Nevertheless the men are a contented and happy lot, all in splendid health, and "ready, aye, ready," is their watchword.



WITH THE HOSE.



RESCUE BY LADDER.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Thursday 9 March 1911, page 4

IMPROVEMENTS TO THE FIRE BRIGADE STATION.

To-night at the Metropolitan Fire Brigade station a gathering will be held to celebrate the opening of the new gymnasium, recently completed. Invitations have been issued to the members of the Ministry, the various corporations within the metropolitan area, and members of the Fire Brigade Board, and it is expected that over 100 guests will be present. The new gymnasium, which has been constructed by the firemen, occupies 50 x 30 ft., with a height of 20 ft., and will afford every means to enable the men to train thoroughly for their serious work of firefighting. Mr. Rickwood is a firm believer in giving the men under his command an abundance of exercise, and it is his intention to compel every man at the station to undertake a severe course in gymnastics. He considers that with the duties they have to perform it is absolutely essential their bodies should be lithe and all muscles well developed. This, he maintains, can be accomplished only by systematic training.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Friday 10 March 1911, page 6

GENERAL NEWS.

FIREMEN AT PLAY.

The firemen of the metropolitan head station for long have needed a gymnasium to complete their equipment for training, and a few months ago they set to work to erect a building, which was officially opened on Thursday evening, when they presented a creditable concert programme to an appreciative audience. Superintendent Rickwood mentioned that during the past two years they had received £94 12/ towards their recreation fund. Several of the insurance companies had generously helped them with donations to the amount of £40 10/6, which had been devoted to the purchase of a piano. Their expenditure had totalled over £88, so the recreation fund was only £5 in credit. He hoped, however, that friends would come along and give them some assistance. Now that they had a fine gymnasium, wholly erected by the firemen, they hoped at an early date to give exhibitions of gymnastic work and other athletic exercises. He invited those present to witness a turn-out and display of fire brigade work on March 22 at 3-p.m.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Thursday 23 March 1911, page 5

SCHOOL HEAD MASTER HURT.

Mr. W. P. Nicholls, head master of the Pulteney street Grammar School, was riding a bicycle up the North Adelaide hill on Tuesday evening, when a motor car belonging to the Fire Brigade, ran into him. He fell heavily, and sustained a fracture of the leg, and a scalp wound. Mr. Nicholls was conveyed to a chemist's shop in O'Connell street, and attended to by Dr. Gilbert. Subsequently he was taken to his home at Magill, where he is progressing favourably.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Saturday 25 March 1911, page 8

FALSE ALARM OF FIRE.

Shortly after noon on Friday the Metropolitan Fire Brigade received a call from a fire alarm in Stephens-place, Adelaide. The brigade responded promptly, but on arrival it was found that a false alarm had been received. It is thought this was caused by the crossing of wires.

The Fire Brigade received a call on Friday morning from the Norfolk Hotel, Rundle-street. It was found on arrival that a quantity of fat in the stove was on fire. The flames were quickly extinguished with chemicals.

Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1895 - 1954), Saturday 8 April 1911, page 43

FIRE IN ADELAIDE.

LOSS OF £2,200.

Early last Saturday morning a fire destroyed the premises in Mellor-street, off Franklin-street, of Messrs. Bawden Bros., coachbuilders. The workshop was completely gutted, and the building was destroyed. Mr. W. A. Bawden, a member of the firm, made the following statement:—"At 7.45, with my brother and Mr. Albert Haley, an employe, I left, after seeing that everything was safe. We had been working late in order to satisfy orders. How the fire originated I am unable to say. When I arrived it was out. We are insured to the extent of £750 with the Colonial Mutual Company, but even when that is paid we will suffer loss to the extent of £1,500. Part of the paintshop was saved, the fire not reaching that portion of the building. While the fire was in progress five vehicles were drawn out to the roadway. We have lost a large stock of well-seasoned timber, two valuable vehicles, a gas engine worth £100, three drilling machines, a band saw, punching and planing machines. The office and its contents were also burnt." Superintendent Rickwood said the call was received from Light-square at 3.7 a.m. On arrival it was found that the premises were enveloped in flames and doomed to destruction. He decided to concentrate attention on the adjoining properties. A good volume of water being available, the brigade were successful in preventing the fire from spreading. The building, constructed of galvanized iron and wood, extended over a block of land, 103 x 60 ft. Adjoining it is a row of cottages and the premises of Messrs. Mellor & Sons. In the shop 13 men were employed and they will be thrown out of work for the time being. The manager hopes to resume operations at an early date.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Monday 1 May 1911, page 7

FIREMEN AT WORK.

FIRE IN CARRINGTON STREET.

A fire occurred in a yard at the rear of the premises of the Port Adelaide Mineral Waters Company in Carrington-street at 10 o'clock last night. Fortunately the Metropolitan Fire Brigade who were summoned by the watchman, were quickly on the spot, and succeeded in preventing the flames from spreading. The only damage done was the destruction of a quantity of straw bottle envelopes.

SMALL FIRE IN A HOUSE.

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade were informed at about 8.20 p.m. on Sunday that a fire had broken out in the house of Mr. F. Matthews, in Hindley-street, and proceeded promptly to the scene. The services of the firemen, however, were not needed as the flames were extinguished before the arrival of the brigade. Little or no damage was done.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Thursday 4 May 1911, page 4

ADELAIDE FIRE BRIGADE STATION.

The Hon. Samuel Mauger while moving a vote of thanks on Thursday morning to the Adelaide Fire Brigades Board for the way they had entertained delegates to the conference, said the accommodation provided for the men at Wakefield-street station put to shame that in which the men lived at Melbourne. The barrack system had gone and there was no justification for herding men like sheep. The development of character and a love of home-life was encouraged in the Adelaide men's quarters. He hoped to see a change in Melbourne in the men's environment on the lines so admirably laid down in South Australia. Delegates thoroughly appreciated the men's drill and their general bearing and appearance.

Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1895 - 1954), Saturday 6 May 1911, page 29

METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADE.



TURN-OUT AT THE CENTRAL STATION. WAKEFIELD-STREET, ADELAIDE. H. Krischock. photo.

The inset is a portrait of Councillor E. Frinsdorf, of the Adelaide City Council, who was elected President of the Inter-State Fire Brigades' Conference, which met in Adelaide this week.

INTERSTATE FIRE BRIGADES.



DELEGATES TO THE FOURTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE. Back row— Deputy-Superintendent J. J. Dickie (S.A.), Mr. A. B. Speeding (Vic), Mr. H. B. Lee (Vic), Hon. S. Mauger (Vic), Councillor E. A. Frinsdorf (President of the Conference), Superintendent W. G. Rickwood (S.A.), Mr. D. Andrew (Vic), Sir Henry Kellett, Bart. (Vic), Mr. F. Bristowe (S.A.), and Mr. H. W. Brown (S.A.). Sitting, left side of table— Mr. R. A. Paxton (S.A.), Mr. W. Campbell (S.A.), Captain J. Hinton (Qld.), Mr. W. M. Chellew (Vic), Mr. T. Lockwood (Vic.), Captain J. Lynch (Vic.), and Major Marshall (Vic). Sitting, right side of table— Alderman J. H. Cooke (S.A.), Mr. F. Krichauff (S.A.), Mr. F. J. Gomm (Vic), Mr. W. D. Ponder, M.P. (S.A.), T. Sanders (Vic), F. T. Hickford (Vic), G. Chapman (Vic), and Colonel J. Ballinger (Vic). H. Krischock, photo.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Friday 12 May 1911, page 1

RAILWAY SMASH.

IN THE DARK AT MILE-END.

PASSENGER TRAIN COLLIDED WITH TRUCKS.

A CARRIAGE BURNED

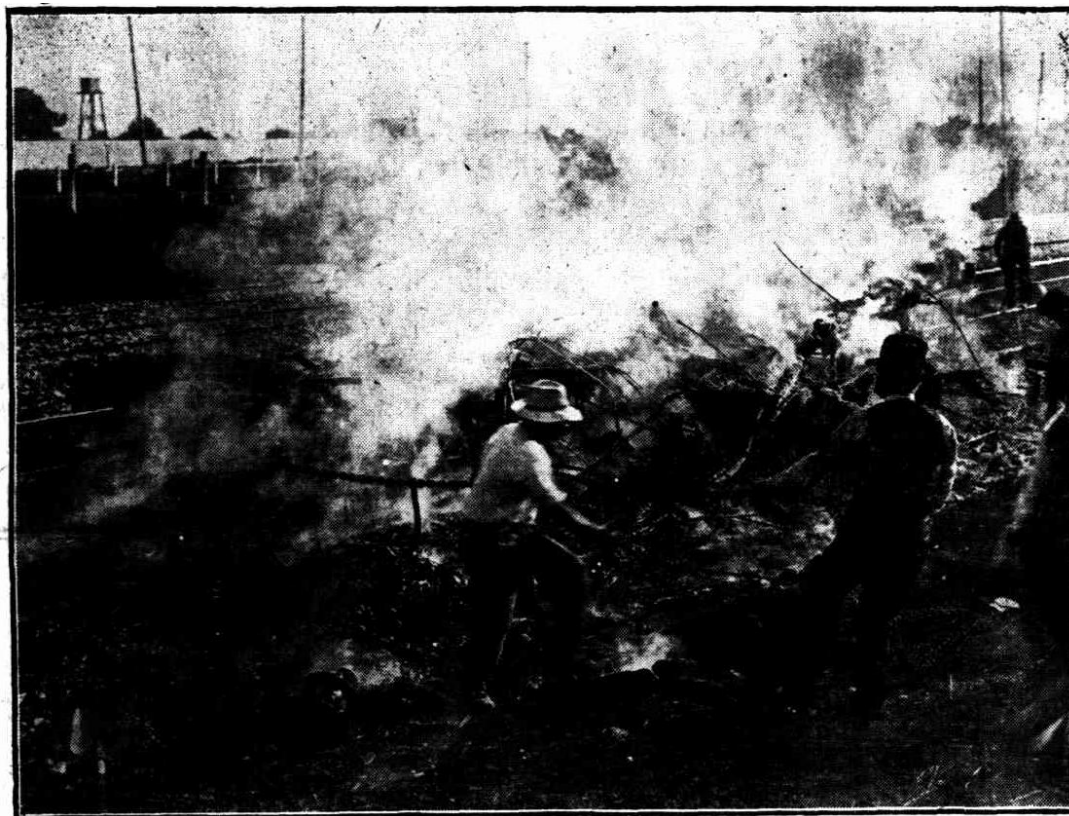
In a railway accident which occurred near to Mile-End on Friday morning there were distinct and alarming possibilities of disaster—fortunately, an occurrence rarely known in South Australia. Rumours which were soon afloat in the city represented the smash to have been infinitely worse than was actually the case. It was stated that a passenger train had been wrecked, the carriages were burning, and that people had been killed.

Trucks Uncoupled.

The facts of the case, as made available by railway officials, on the scene of the incident, while the debris was being cleared away, were fragmentary. A mischance or a blunder on some one's part appears to have caused the trouble. Early on Friday morning a goods engine left the North terrace yard for the purpose of shunting a number of trucks to the Mile-End freight depot. During the short journey four heavy steel trucks, loaded with sand from Gawler, of which delivery was to be taken by the consignee at Mile End, became uncoupled. They were left, unknown to the shunter, or anyone else, on the main down line, about 150 yards south from the Port Road bridge, and the adjacent tramways viaduct used by the Henley Beach and Hindmarsh cars. There are four lines of rails there, and they curve around to the Mile End level crossing, and the signal cabin, which are several hundred yards away.

Clapham "Dodger" in Trouble.

The first train to pass along was the 5.58 passenger from Adelaide, for Clapham, known as "The Dodger." The sun did not rise until 7.1 am, and it was a dull morning, with a tendency to a drizzling rain. The train was hauled by engine No. 122, of the comparatively light, small tank, P type, used for short runs, and often seen on the Port line. The driver was Mr. B. Turner and the fireman Mr. E. Lucas. There were four carriages, the last of which was a combination brake van, of which Guard W. Castle was in charge.



THE BURNING CARRIAGE.

Train Nearly Empty.

It understood—although not definitely known—that the signals were in favour of the train, which came around the curve in the usual expectation that the line was clear and crashed into the trucks. There is a slight upgrade at the spot, and on account of the short distance to the Mile-End station the train was travelling at a moderate speed. There were only two passengers, and both were connected with the Railway Department. One was returning from his night's work and the other was proceeding to duty at one of the stations along the line. They were seated in one of the rear carriages, and together with the railway men in charge of the train came out of the collision luckily. What chiefly affected them was the sudden shock. They sustained no bodily injuries.

Carriage in Flames.

The impact was so violent that the smoke stack was knocked off the engine, the buffer beams and buffing gear were damaged, and all the glass in the windows and lamps were shattered. The carriage next to the engine was badly smashed. If anyone had been seated within it how seriously he would have fared may only be conjectured. The roof lamps were lit, and immediately after the crash, in consequence of a hole having been knocked in the Pintsch's gas tank, the carriage broke into flames. The splintered woodwork burnt freely, and not long afterwards only charred and smoking embers and the steel undergear were left. The other carriages were not much damaged. The trucks were considerably knocked about. For a distance of a chain the permanent way was torn up, and the ballasting strewn around. The rails were bent out of shape.

Fire Brigade Called.

The speediest possible steps were taken to notify the railway officials at headquarters of the accident, and precautions were observed to prevent the flames from spreading to the other carriages. The Metropolitan Fire Brigade was summoned, but its services were not required. It was too late to save the carriage already on fire.

Repairing the Line.

The railway schedule was not seriously interfered with, as other outgoing trains were switched on to another line. A gang of 65 men were hurriedly put on to remove the wreckage and repair the track. They were under the direction of the Resident Engineer (Mr. A. E. Welbourn) and the Outdoor Running Superintendent (Mr. G. Yeomans). As a result of bustling activity the normal condition of the permanent way was restored at 10.15, shortly after the express from Melbourne puffed past the wreckage. A crane was requisitioned for lifting the heavy objects.

Enquiry to be Held.

The General Traffic Manager (Mr. J. B. McNeil) was seen regarding the accident at 9.30. but declined to enter into details. "I have not spoken to any one yet." he observed, "about what happened. Just at present the chief consideration is to restore the state of the track. We shall have an enquiry so soon as possible." Do you know whether the signals were against the train?—That is a matter for the enquiry. If the driver had sighted the trucks on passing beneath the tramway viaduct, would there have been time for him to pull up?— That remains to be seen. If a man had been riding at the rear of the shunting train, would not the possibility of wagons becoming uncoupled without being observed have been obviated ?— That is also a matter for the enquiry. Other departmental officers were equally reticent. They were not in a position to offer theories regarding the accident.

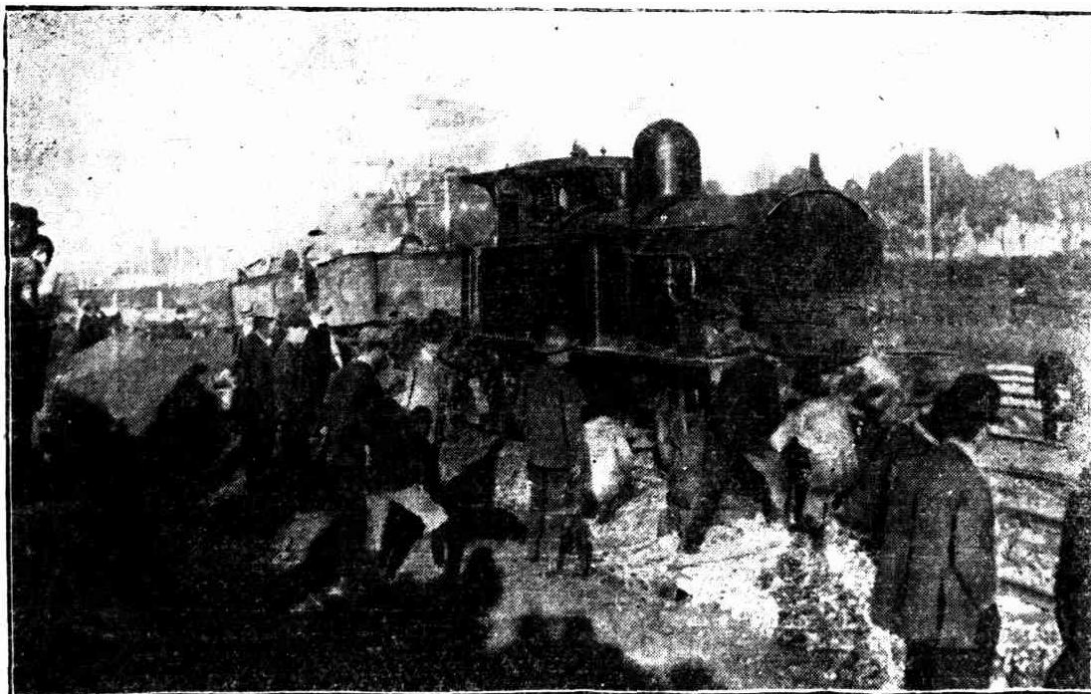
Official Version.

Mr. A. N. Day (Secretary to the Railways Commissioner) told a reporter that while a goods train was being shunted from Adelaide to Mile-End at 5.30 a.m. four trucks became detached between the tramway viaduct and the Mile-End crossing, and as it was dark and cloudy they were not noticed on the line by the driver of the 5.58 passenger train from Adelaide to

Clapham. The engine of the latter train was within half a dozen yards of the trucks before he became aware of their presence, and although the brakes were applied immediately it was too late to prevent a collision and the front coach, the trucks were considerably damaged, the engine suffered to a great extent, and the road was torn up for some yards. The shock of the collision caused one of the cylinders containing Pintsch's gas, used in the lighting of the coaches, and situated under the front carriage to explode, The result was that the whole of the woodwork of the carriages was totally destroyed. In this connection Mr. Day stated the Railways Commissioner (Mr. A. B. Moncrieff, C.M.G.) wished it to be publicly notified that all carriages now being constructed by the department, were being fitted with Stone's electric light, which would do away with the use of gas. The accident disorganized the traffic on the South line for some time. Early trains were held up for about an hour, but the up double line was used, and the Melbourne express was only 1 minutes late in arriving at the Adelaide Station. By 10.30 the line was completely cleared, and traffic was resumed. Driver Turner, of the Clapham train, was shaken, but it is not though- that his injuries are serious. The fireman, guard, and ticket collector escaped with a few minor bruises and abrasions. An official enquiry into the circumstances of the accident would be opened immediately, but it might be found necessary to adjourn until the condition of the driver had improved.

Superintendent Rickwood's Statement.

Lieut. Rickwood (Superintendent of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade) said he received a call from the Railway Department at 6.22, and when he learned the nature of the services required, he dispatched two appliances with 2,700 ft. of hose to the scene of the accident. On arrival, however, although the brigade got to Mile-End in excellent time, it was evident their services would not be required, as the one carriage on fire was doomed, and the remaining portion of the train had been detached. Had it been found impossible to remove the other coaches from the burning carriage the brigade would have been useful, as with the hose they had with them, and the assistance of the motor pump, they could have worked on the fire from either the Port or Henley Beach roads.



THE DAMAGED LOCOMOTIVE.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Wednesday 17 May 1911, page 1

FALSE ALARM OF FIRE.

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade received a call from Grote-street at 11.38 a.m. on Wednesday. The firemen responded promptly, but on arrival it was found to be a false alarm, caused through the crossing of telephone and telegraph wires.

Daily Herald (Adelaide, SA : 1910 - 1924), Thursday 18 May 1911, page 5

FIRE BRIGADE DISPLAYS

The public is beginning to "drop to" Wednesday afternoon turns-out of the fire brigade as being not worth following up. For there is no fire at the end. Wednesday afternoons being devoted to a public display of men's routine. The exhibition of drill in which the men perform all the duties required at a "real" fire, is followed by a real (not merely a reel) turnout. A number of people—as was the case yesterday—always attend these exhibitions, and show approval of the rescue work, ladder climbing, and body catching, by applause. Mr. R. G. Shorthose is the drill instructor, but in his absence yesterday Foreman Davis conducted the display.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Monday 29 May 1911, page 4

FIRE REEL AND MOTOR COLLIDE.

One of the fire reels was returning to the station from the fire in Pirie-street by way of Hyde-street on Sunday night, and when turning into Flinders-street a motor collided with one of the front wheels. Little if any damage was done to either the motor or the reel.

Daily Herald (Adelaide, SA : 1910 - 1924), Thursday 1 June 1911, page 5

BIG CITY FIRE.

New Market Ablaze.

Produce Stores Destroyed.

Spencer Carriage Co. Saved.

Good Work by the Brigade.

Between 1.40 and 1.45 this morning some pedestrians wending their way home along Rundle street saw a dense volume of smoke issuing from the New Market. They at once saw that some portion of the Union street frontage was on fire, so they at once gave the alarm.

THE MARKET IN FLAMES.

The fire was in that portion of the New Market building occupied by Mr. W. Bix, chaff merchant, and near Mr. J. H. Penna's shoeing forge. The smoke was not long the only evidence of fire for in less than two minutes a huge burst of flame shot up through the roof of the buildings and a cloud of sparks was blown over the neighborhood. Policemen from all sides flocked to the spot, but they could do nothing till the brigade arrived. No time was lost by the motor engine in reaching Union street, but by the time it got into position and the firemen ran the hose out the fire had a good hold of the whole frontage to Union street, from the Richard Spencer Carriage Company down to the house just south of Brown's shop at the corner of Rundle street.

SPREADING RAPIDLY.

The fire spread from Mr. Rix' to Messrs. Brown & Son's fruit ware-house, and then on to Mr. A. Davies' and Messrs. I. Senior and the lane being narrow the work of the firemen was at first rendered difficult. The attention of the fire-fighters was first of all directed to preventing the flames spreading. A hose was directed to the blaze over Mr. A. Davies' premises to prevent it getting hold of the house next door. The wind was carrying the flames in that direction, and the occupants who were only in their night garments were gathered on the verandah and looking out of the upper windows, and evidently were greatly alarmed. But five

minutes of cold water being poured on the fire saved the situation in that direction. In the meantime two hoses tackled the blaze, which was raging fiercely near the Richard Spencer Carriage and Waggon Manufacturing Company's premises. Streams of water were directed on the roof and wall of the market and kept the flames from Spencer's. The roof fell in, and then a ladder was run up against Spencer's front wall, and a fireman with a hose mounted it and poured a good stream of water into the burning mass and saved the carriage works.

HORSES SCARED.

Immediately opposite the Union street main entrance to the Arcade is a stable, where some seven or eight horses were stalled. The heat and glare of the fire frightened the animals very considerably, and for a time was thought that they would break away from their halters and stampede. But an attendant soon put in an appearance, and, getting among the horses, pacified them.

A BLAZE OF FLAMES

When the fire was at its height the flames leapt upwards with great fury, and smoke and sparks belched forth from the upper windows of the building. The interior was constructed of light material, covered with galvanised iron, and fell an easy prey to the greedy fire fiend. The flames crept along the rafters over the entrance and curled up the eaves above. The electric light wires fused, and for a few seconds the released fluid added a blue sheen to the conflagration.

THE SPENCER CARRIAGE COMPANY THREATENED.

Having checked the course of the fire in a northerly direction an extra lot of firemen were told off to attend to the southern side, where the Richard Herbert Spencer Carriage Company had a fine row of buildings heavily stocked with valuable carriages. From front and rear water was played on the inflammable wood and iron structure, and although there was a slight breeze blowing in that direction by strenuous efforts the brigade were able to effect a good save. No effort was made to remove any of the vehicles, and while for a time it looked as if the building and contents were doomed practically no damage was done.

THE MARKETS CONDITION

All this time there was a fierce fire raging in the interior of the big market building, and the galvanised iron walls dividing the various produce forwarding agencies curled and collapsed before the flames. The arch over the entrance to the market from Union street was stripped of all the inflammable material and the force of the water threatened to bring down the brickwork. Inside the market all was clear, for the few vehicles that had been taken into the market on the previous night were removed, and the brigade had ample room to work among the fire.

A FINE SIGHT.

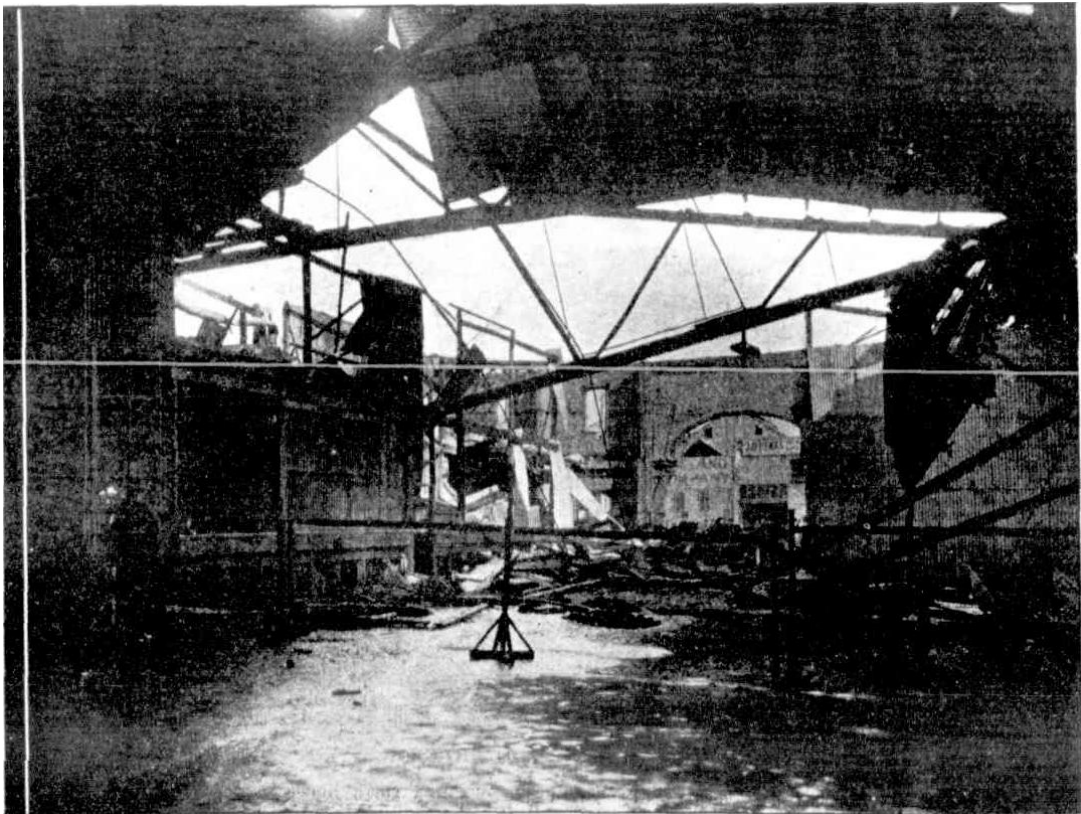
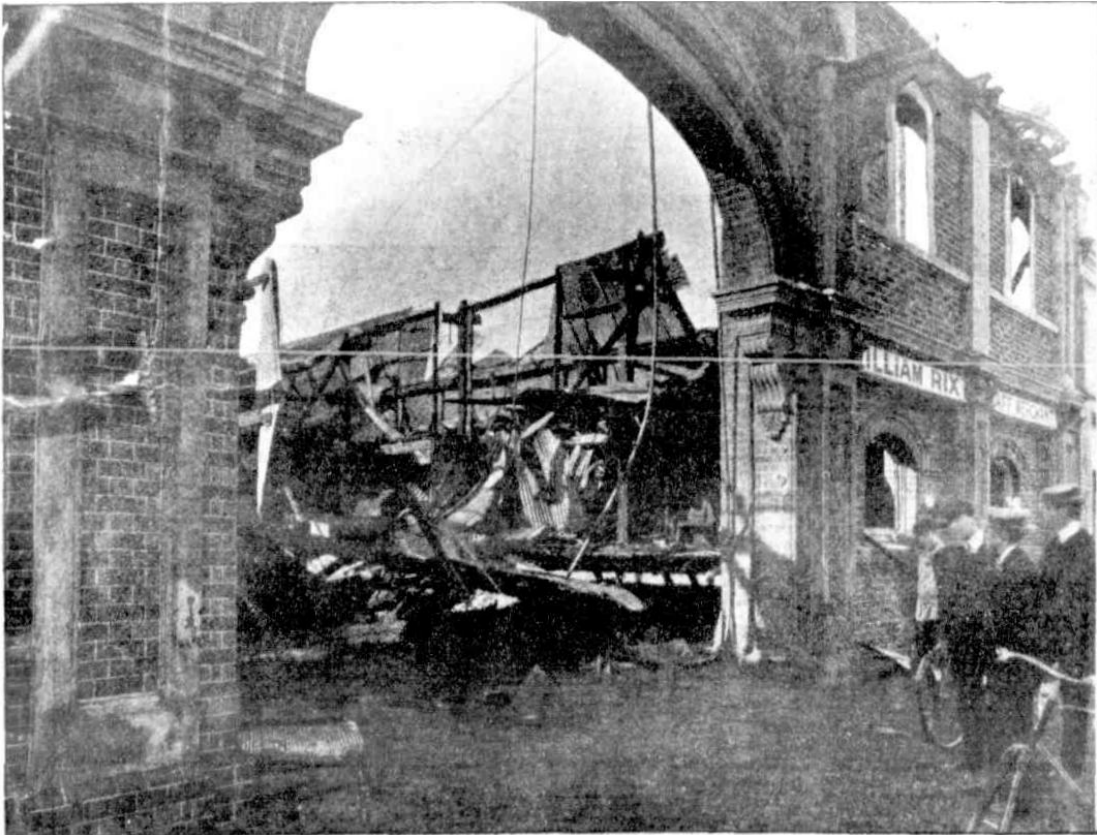
The night was clear, and with the fire raging along the roof of the lofty structure it lit up the heavens so that it could have been seen from all parts of the city, with the result that when the brigade had practically completed their work there was a good crowd of spectators.

THE BRIGADE APPRISED.

It was at 1.45 that the Metropolitan Fire Brigade were apprised of the outbreak, and then communications came simultaneously from both Rundle and Flinders street alarm. The whole force of the metropolitan brigade were soon at work, but the assistance of the suburban fighters were not required. It would be impossible to estimate the damage, but the chief loss would be in the building itself, as the stock in the smaller places would not be of a very valuable nature. Within an hour of the first intimation of the outbreak the fire was practically extinguished.

Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1895 - 1954), Saturday 10 June 1911, page 30

FIRE IN THE CITY.



SCENES IN THE NEW MARKET AFTER THE CONFLAGRATION ON THURSDAY
MORNING, JUNE 1. Photos by H. Krischock.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Wednesday 9 August 1911, page 9

FIRE BRIGADE DEMONSTRATION.

In the evening the whole of the foot-ballers were the guests of the league at the Fire Station, Wakefield street, where, through the courtesy of Supt. Rickwood, a turnout and drill demonstration were given by the men. Supper was served from tables set in the yard, and a burlesque vaudeville show was contributed in the gymnasium room by the firemen. A splendid exhibition of jiu jitsu and catch-as-catch-can wrestling was witnessed, and the programme concluded with an amusing skit on the Burns-Johnson fight. Mr. F. Marlow, on behalf of the South Australian League, thanked Supt. Rickwood and the members of the brigade for the pleasing evening they had given the footballers, He mentioned that there were representatives of every State present, and he was sure they would all go back with happy recollections of that night. (Applause.) He called for cheers for the brigade, which were lustily given. Superintendent Rickwood said so long as the visitors had enjoyed themselves, his men were satisfied. At his call cheers were given for the foot-ballers by the firemen.

Daily Herald (Adelaide, SA : 1910 - 1924), Friday 18 August 1911, page 6

BICYCLE COLLISION.

FIRE BRIGADE SUED.

In the local Court on Thursday, before his Honor Mr. Commissioner Russell and justices, an action was brought by William Percival Nicholls, headmaster of the Pulteney street school, against the Fire Brigade Board for the sum of £99 as the result of a collision between the plaintiff and a motor car belonging to the defendant board. Mr. A. Melrose appeared for the complainant, while Mr. A. W. Piper, K.C., was for the defendants.

The plaintiff gave evidence as to the nature of the collision. He heard no sound of an approaching car until he was struck down. He heard someone call out "Look out," but the next thing he knew was that he was sitting on the side of the road with his clothes torn. Plaintiff then entered into further particulars of the accident.

Mr. Piper—Were you in a reverie?—No, certainly not. (Laughter.)

I mean, were you lost in sweet contemplation at the time of the accident?— No. (Renewed laughter.)

Do you remember speaking to anyone after the accident?—Yes. Then you were not dizzy?— Yes, I was. And what about your hat?—I was not thinking of my hat. I was thinking of my leg all the time. Was the car near the kerbstone?—No; it was stationary.

Thomas Venus said that on the day in question he saw the occurrence. Plaintiff was on a bicycle coming up the hill from the Children's Hospital, going towards North Adelaide, when the motor ran into him. He saw the car coming in the direction of the city, travelling at a good speed. He heard no horn blown, but someone cried out, "Look out." Plaintiff was thrown off the bicycle on to the road, and when witness saw him, blood was running down the back of his neck. Mr. Piper—You were not looking for a collision?—Oh, no. But you were keeping your eyes open?—Yes; I wanted to catch a car. Did you hear the car coming up?—No. Mr. Piper then addressed the bench, stating that the complainant, upon his own showing, was responsible for the accident. He would call evidence to prove that the defendant Board was not guilty of any negligence.

Norman Tabrett said that on the day in question he was the driver of the motor hose cart. He sighted the complainant when he was about three yards ahead of him. Complainant seemed to lose his balance because the bicycle seemed to come right over to the motor. The collision

occurred, and the complainant was struck on his leg. Witness stopped the car sharply, but was too late to avoid the collision. When the plaintiff was picked up he said, "I thought you were going around the corner."

Morris Driscoll, laborer, said that he remembered the collision between the cyclist and the motor car last April. It happened about 5 o'clock in the afternoon. The motor pulled up very quickly, but too late to avoid the accident. He did not think that the defendant was at fault.

After hearing further evidence, his Honour said that there was a direct contradiction of evidence as regarded the collision, but the evidence of the plaintiff was supported in its most material parts. The court has considered the whole of the facts and found for the plaintiff. Damages for £75.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Saturday 28 October 1911, page 12

FIRE IN WAYMOUTH STREET.

The Metropolitan Brigade was called out on Friday evening to a small fire in Way-mouth street. Although there are fire alarm boxes quite near the scene, the person who gave notice to the brigade was evidently unaware of their proximity, and the call was made from the corner of Bank street and Hindley street, which necessitated a long journey for the fire fighters through busy thoroughfares. The burning proved to be in the establishment of Messrs. Sellick & Son, surgical boot-makers— a quaint old single-storied building resembling in design a Doric gateway. The firemen found that a gas jet had ignited some material, and they extinguished the flames before any considerable damage had been done.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Monday 30 October 1911, page 4

CASUALTIES.

FIRE CALLS.

With the thermometer registering over 95 in the shade on Sunday, people not unnaturally thought of fires. This idea, was emphasized by the brigade dashing through the street on three occasions during the evening. Fortunately two of the calls turned out to be false alarms, while in the third case the fire was confined to some grass at the rear of the City Baths.

[Monday 20th November 1911 – Fire at D. & J. Fowlers, King William Street, Adelaide.](#)

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Tuesday 21 November 1911, page 1

THE MORNING AFTER

D. & J. FOWLER S FIRE

A Clean Sweep.

In a daylight inspection of the ruin caused by the fire in D. & J. Fowler's bulk store. King William street, on Monday night, it became more convincing, even to a casual onlooker, what a great "save" the Brigade had accomplished. The gutted block is bordered on all sides by most valuable buildings, yet with the exception of a scorch here and there nothing was damaged outside the four walls of the bulk store, where, however, there in the daylight had been a clean sweep. The four walls stand erect, and bore their part nobly in the fierce blaze. There are cracks here and there, solid masonry having been split by the intense heat; but all the damage was inside those four walls. In a corner here and there little articles that one might imagine would have perished in the first rise of the temperature were left unscathed. Stout iron girders were twisted and rent in twain, yet in one little corner cardboard boxes filled with delicious chocolates remained un-touched. The thick plateglass window just above them had been smashed into tiny pieces by the inferno, but the boxes were only coloured by smoke. But what a wreck there was? The three floors had crashed down on to the ground level, the merchandise and groceries had been reduced to heaps of ashes, and all that was to be seen was a twisted and turned mass of iron girders, sheets of iron heaps of smouldering

woo, and hot dust. It was remarkable that a Bougainvillea creeper which clings to the wall on the northern side of the doomed premises came out of the ordeal almost uninjured. It was flourishing in all its glory on Tuesday morning. Much of the smell and smoke on Monday night came from burning bacon and ham, of which there were many cwt. in the store. The basement, in which the engineers shop is situated, seemed to be untouched except for water, which was feet deep.



A CORNER OF THE RUINS.

CORNER OF THE RUINS.

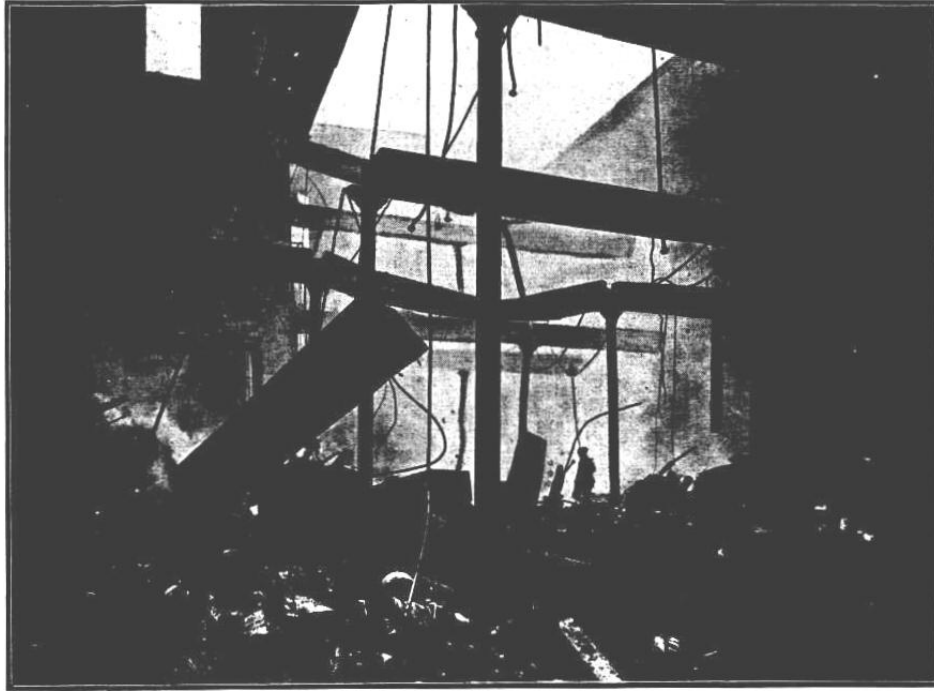
Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Wednesday 22 November 1911, page 15

THE BIG CITY FIRE.

EARLY MORNING SCENES

BALING OUT WATER.

Long after midnight on Monday, when the last of the crowd who gathered about lanes leading to the doomed store of Messrs. D. & J. Fowler had left for their homes, and only the firemen and constables remained, volumes of smoke and dust, assisted by a stiff wind, continued to obscure objects at the corner of King William-street and North-terrace, and fill the rooms of those adjacent buildings, the windows of which had been left open.



AFTER THE FIRE IN MESSRS. D. & J. FOWLER'S WAREHOUSE. Photo by Krischock.

Throughout the night eight firemen were on duty, turning streams of water wherever flames, suddenly finding an opening beneath the debris, shot out and began consuming whatever was not too much saturated with water to burn. As dawn approached and the milkman and other early risers started to congregate round the scene of the fire, the gates of the lanes were closed. Between 8 and 9 there was a large crowd of eager onlookers in King William-street, but all they could see was the tall rubble wall faced with brick, in places blackened by the fire, and a fireman on a head of black debris—the burnt tins, which once contained lard, rolls of paper, nuts, boxes of cocoa, &c.—holding the nozzle of the hose in the direction of the smouldering ruins. But from a closer view a more accurate estimate of the magnitude of the fire could be made. Twisted by the intense heat, iron columns had crashed to the ground, tearing away with them from the wall the iron girders they supported. The girders had lodged in the most perilous positions. The end of one was hidden in the rubbish piled up on the floor, while the opposite extremity rested on a frail beam, looking as if only a little strength would be required to make it topple over on the men below. Iron rods had been twisted into curious shapes with just as much ease as one would twist a thin piece of wire rope. Wherever the eye reached was seen a pile of black, smouldering rubbish, here and there being an article one could distinguish; wires and rods hanging loosely to charred beams, from every position the background being cracked walls. From the yard of Dr. Humphrey Martin's home on North-terrace bare walls only could be seen, though the people there assembled did not fail to notice the narrowness of the escape from destruction of the adjoining outbuildings. In the lane at the rear of the store where it adjoins Messrs. James Marshall and Co.'s boot department an idea was obtained of the enormous damage which would have resulted had the wind been from the north or west. A nest of buildings is there, and had they caught fire the efforts of the firemen to save them must have been fruitless. As the building was viewed from different positions, it was noticed that the structures in the vicinity were not even scorched, one was impressed with the wisdom which directed that the walls should be of brick or stone. It was the brick and stone walls which enabled the brigade to prevent the fire from spreading.

Water in the Basement.

A solid wall divides the establishments of Messrs. D. & J. Fowler and Messrs. James Marshall & Co. but this did not prevent a large volume of water percolating through. There was more than 6 ft. of it in Fowler's store, but in Marshall & Co.'s basement the depth was not nearly so

great. With buckets a number of the latter firm's employes set to work early to bale out the water. It had entered several departments and damaged the goods. Mr. James Marshall was not in a position to say how much money would have to be spent in repairing the damage. With their collars off, their shirt sleeves turned back, and the legs of their trousers rolled up, the shop assistants seemed to enjoy the change of work. A few yards further down the steam fire engine was at work. It was started shortly after 11 o'clock, and through two lines of hose a large volume of water was soon being removed from the basement into the gutter in Stephens-place. Later in the afternoon the engine was removed to the front of the store, and the water was pumped on to North-terrace. At 6 o'clock the engine was hard at work, and there was still 2 ft. of water to be pumped out.

Kerosine Saved.

As far as could be ascertained, the only portion of Messrs. D. & J. Fowler's building not destroyed was a cellar capable of holding 1,200 gallons of kerosine. Situated at the rear of the building, in the northern corner, its thick walls are constructed of brick, and the doors of iron. The representatives of the firm were not able to state the quantity of oil in the cellar.

The Insurances.

The building, machinery, and fittings were insured with the Alliance Insurance Co. for £26,000.

Small Outbreak in the Office.

The attention of the firemen at about 7 a.m. was directed to the roof of Messrs. D. & J. Fowler's offices, situated in front of the store. They found some electric wires had fused, the flames were quickly extinguished.

ANOTHER FIRE.

SPARKS FROM FOWLER'S THE CAUSE.

Mr. H. Mallan, the dentist, occupies the first floor of the premises in King William street, adjoining the Gresham Hotel. Soon after the members of his staff began their duties on Tuesday morning they were inconvenienced by a smell, which appeared to emanate from some smouldering substance, but they took little notice of the trouble, believing it to be due to the fire at Fowler's, on the other side of the street. By 10 o'clock, however, a crackling sound was heard over the ceiling, and smoke began to make its appearance through the joints of the light court. The young men in Mr. Mallan's employ procured a ladder, and on opening the man hole in the ceiling at the end of the passage at once realised that there was something burning there. Buckets of water were applied, but the fire could not be subdued, and Superintendent Rickwood noticing the smoke from the other side of the street, hurried over and gave instructions for a chemical outfit to be telephoned for. In the meantime someone had broken an alarm and called out the brigade. The motor engine, ladder, and the reel soon arrived, but the chemical apparatus was all that was needed, and in half an hour the timber over the ceiling and that supporting the roof, which had been burning freely, was saturated with water after the chemical fumes had done their work, and all danger had been removed. Mr. Mallan, who had returned from Melbourne by the express, which arrived a few minutes before the brigade were called out, was much inconvenienced by the outbreak, but the loss occasioned was trifling. Superintendent Rickwood said afterwards there was little doubt that sparks from Fowler's fire had settled on the roof and set fire to the saw-dust and rubbish which had collected under the ends of the galvanized iron. The building is insured in the Norwich Union Company for £3,000 and the contents in the Commercial Union Company for £1,000.

TRIBUTE TO THE FIREMEN.

To the Editor.

Sir—Will you kindly allow me to give my testimony to the gallant, manly efforts of the Adelaide Fire Brigade at the great conflagration last night? Amongst the thousands of people who saw the fire there were hardly any who thought it possible to restrain the fire within the sphere of D. and J. Fowler's premises. But, thanks to the superlative efforts of our noble Fire Brigade, the unexpected has again happened, and Adelaide has been spared being half burned down. The way the men worked in the face of the tremendous heat and the manner in which they prevented the spread of the fire to adjoining premises, having regard to the cramped position they were placed in, deserve our heartiest commendation. May I also pay my tribute to the humane and sympathetic advice tendered to the men by one of their officers? Many lives have been sacrificed owing to plucky men throwing prudence to the winds, and I was glad to hear that Dep. Sup. Dickie felt so solicitous for the welfare of his men as to warn them not to go too far. Those who have read Mr. E. Croker, late chief of the New York Brigade, will appreciate what was said at this exciting moment. I am sure I am here voicing the proud opinions of thousands of citizens.

I am, &c.,

HARRY JACKSON. Parliament House, November 21, 1911

Critic (Adelaide, SA : 1897-1924), Wednesday 22 November 1911, page 5

FOWLERS' FIRE.

It is a long time since Adelaide has seen such a spectacular fire display as was witnessed in the city on Monday evening, when Messrs. D. & J. Fowler's bulk store was burnt out. The draught sent a rain of fiery fragments, which showered upon the roofs of other buildings, and upon the spectators generally. Messrs. James Marshall, Donaldson's, The Coliseum all seem threatened, and false alarms that they were on fire were circulated among the crowd. It is only due to the superhuman efforts of the Fire Brigade that this danger was averted. It was a matter of general surprise how the firemen stood the extreme heat at close quarters, as it drove the general public back as efficiently as the police did. The utmost sympathy is expressed with the members of the firm of D. and J. Fowler's, as the dislocation of their business will cause immense inconvenience, especially now at Christmas time.



FOWLERS' FIRE.
View of lane at back of Fowlers', where the fire raged all Tuesday night. The bulk store of Messrs. D. & J. Fowler, Ltd., was completely gutted.

Daily Herald (Adelaide, SA : 1910 - 1924), Thursday 23 November 1911, page 4

THE FIRE.

The City Coroner decided yesterday morning that there was to be no inquest on the fire at D. & J. Fowler's. During Wednesday the brigade was still in charge of the building, and water was put on the smouldering remains. Colonel Freeman, the well-known adjuster of fire insurance claims, will arrive in Adelaide to-morrow morning from Melbourne for the purpose of adjusting the claims in connection with the fire. The total of the insurance is £26,000, namely, £19,500 on the stock, £4000 on the buildings, and £2500 on the machinery and plant.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Friday 24 November 1911, page 6

FOWLER'S FIRE.

The Coroner has decided not to hold an inquest concerning the disastrous fire which occurred on Monday night at Messrs. D. and J. Fowler's.

Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1895 - 1954), Saturday 25 November 1911, page 43

BIG FIRE IN ADELAIDE,

MESSRS. D. & J. FOWLERS' BULK STORE GUTTED LOSS OF TENS OF THOUSANDS OF POUNDS.

But for the fact that the wind was strongly blowing from the east, and that Adelaide possesses one of the best disciplined and equipped fire brigades in Australia, a conflagration which began in Messrs. D. & J. Fowler's bulk store on Monday evening at about 9.30 o'clock would have developed into one of the most awful catastrophes that this city has ever experienced. The building stands in the very centre of the commercial heart of Adelaide. Immediately to the west and facing King William-street are the offices of the firm; on the east is a portion of the colossal establishment of Messrs. James Marshall & Co., which sweeps round it also on the south. The rear of the huge premises of Messrs Donaldson, Andrews, & Co. and Stevenson Bros. also abut on the lane running along-side the doomed premises. On the north is Dr. Humphrey Marten's house and the Adelaide Club. At various periods while the flames were at their height all these places were endangered, for the inflammable articles with which the vast stores were packed created a blaze which leaped in livid tongues of fire high above the lofty walls. The draught, caused by the intense heat sent large fragments of burning timber soaring through the air for scores of yards. The menace from this rain of burning missiles was very great. Indeed, it was related by some of the spectators that big sparks having the appearance of rockets fell on premises as far away as the ware-house of Messrs. G. Wood, Son, and Co. on North-terrace.

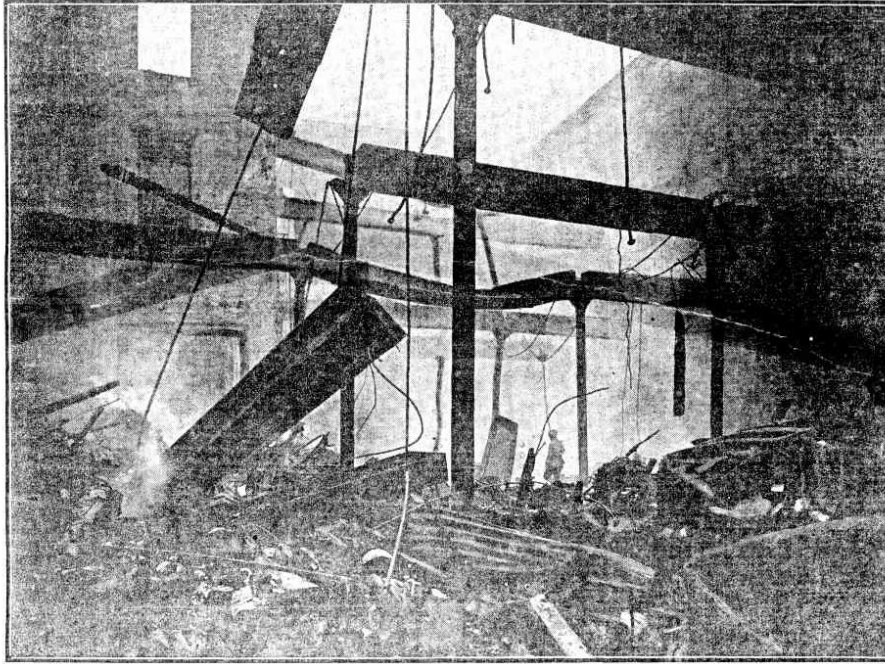


Photo by Krischock. AFTER THE FIRE IN MESSRS. D. & J. FOWLER'S WAREHOUSE.

Photo by Krischock, AFTER THE FIRE IN MESSRS. D. & J. FOWLER'S WAREHOUSE.

The firemen were actually called away to extinguish a miniature blaze which had been started by the floating embers on the roof of Messrs. Gollin & Co.'s premises, opposite Parliament House.

A Point of Great Danger.

The building in which the fire started had a total length of 160 ft. by a width of 60 ft., and rises to a height of three stories. It is hemmed in on every side by warehouses and other structures, crammed for the most part with valuable stock. Fortunately, with one exception, none of the adjacent business houses is taller than the store in which the fire was blazing. Otherwise even despite the providential direction of the wind it is doubtful whether the brigade could have prevented the flames from spreading. There were few openings in the walls to the south and east, and although the fire raged with the fury and intensity of an inferno within its own boundaries, the blaze, when it rushed through the roof with a pyramid of incandescent smoke pouring about it on all sides, was high above most of the neighboring structures. On the east there was only a space of about 20 ft. or 30 ft. between the rear of Fowler's premises and the back wall of one of Marshall's warehouses. Here the danger was tremendous, and the fire-men, apprehending the fact, concentrated their efforts on the herculean task of preventing the flames from leaping the chasm and finding a lodgement in the neighboring building. Several times the rumor ran round the excited crowd that Marshall's had really caught alight, but fortunately enquiry falsified the statement in every instance, although right up until 11 o'clock the imminent peril continued, and an anxious watch was kept.

The First Glimpse of the Fire.

The outbreak of the fire was first noticed at about 9.30 o'clock. One of the earliest persons to see it was Councillor F. K. Nicass, of Hindmarsh, who was passing along North-terrace, when looking up the lane by the Adelaide Club, he saw flames issuing from the upper windows at the western end of Fowler's building. He immediately ran into Rundle-street and called the brigade from the corner of Rundle-street and Stephens-place. Other persons saw the fire at about the same time, and immediately communicated with the brigade. Evidently the fire had been burning for some time before it made its presence known by the glow through the

windows. Boxed and baled goods, wrapping paper, bags, bales of hops, some cases of kerosine, and other favorite food for a fire, which has once begun to smoulder were all stored in great quantities, and by the time the brigade arrived — and they were on the scene with accustomed promptitude— the building and its contents were practically doomed. Water flung upon a conflagration such as that which developed within the first half hour after the flames were seen merely seems to feed the blaze. The cataracts poured in from the many lines of hose soon in play were greeted in a spirit which seemed like derision by volumes of fierce flame and cascades of glowing sparks more fearfully attractive, than the most elaborate pyrotechnic display. The news that the fire fiend was afoot spread with marvellous rapidity, but the flames extended almost as speedily. Within a few minutes of the time that only three or four persons in the city know of the catastrophe the flames lighting up the sky above were advertising their presence to everyone within the range of vision.

A Dense and Excited Crowd.

People in the immediate vicinity of the fire at once hurried towards the spot, and as the eager flames leaped higher and higher all the metropolitan area seemed to be alive with scurrying feet. Like a great beacon the lurid smoke cloud mounted above the fiery cauldron, and all the distant suburbs saw the glow. Every tramcar moving towards the central city was rushed, and conveyances meant to accommodate 60 people each carried over 100 to the scene. His Excellency the Governor was one of the earliest on the scene, and Captain Fletcher was also an interested spectator.

Work of the Brigade.

The members of the Fire Brigade attacked the fire from many points. There are several lanes giving access to Fowler's store. A steam engine, belching smoke and sprinkling sparks, stood in Rundle street, and from this lines of hose were taken down Stephens-place and to the eastern end of the burning building. Another engine was working briskly in North-terrace, and from it the hoses ran across Dr. Marten's garden and thence up the ladders on which the firemen were perched. Other lines were taken up the lane by the Adelaide Club. A third engine was stationed near the Gresham Hotel, and from it hoses were taken up the alley between Fowler's offices and the offices of Messrs. Bagot, Shakes, & Lewis to the front door of the burning building. From other coigns of vantage, too, the firemen toiled at their task. They showed skill and courage which won the admiration of the onlookers, for they seemed to be quite oblivious of danger. As a city councillor remarked : — "Often people think the firemen have a good time because they appear to do nothing all day but wear picturesque clothes and go through interesting drills. But a night like this makes up an average which few can equal, of valiant and useful service." Adelaide has indeed reason to be proud both of its magnificent water supply and of the splendid manner in which it is utilised on such occasions as that which tested the efficiency and the resource of the fire brigade on Monday night. But for the judgement and cool experience with which their efforts were directed, the whole great block of edifices between King William and Rundle street, Stephens-place, and North-terrace might have been swept away, and then the loss, instead of being reckoned by tens of thousands of pounds, would have been far beyond a million. From the very outset it was plainly evident that the store and its multifarious contents had to go. The fight, waged with such pertinacity and vigor, was to save the rest of the block. That battle ended in glorious victory.

Pyrotechnics.

As a spectacle the fire will long be a vivid memory for those who viewed it. Adelaide could not have, even had it tried, imagined such a magnificent pyrotechnic display. One might be pardoned for allowing the splendid brilliance of the illuminations to submerge the thought of the dire consequences, the irremediable loss that such a conflagration entails. Viewed from a short distance down Hindley-street the splendor of the picture was such that neither the cameras which were so busy, nor the brush of a painter, nor the picturesque language of the descriptive writer, could hope to reproduce a true and adequate impression of the grand and

awful scene. At 20 minutes past 10 the big attendance at West's pictures filed unsuspectingly into the street. "A fire." The excited voice of a small boy gave the crowd warning, and as the throng pressed into the thoroughfare they stood almost appalled. The first thought appeared to be that the Theatre Royal was ablaze, but that idea was quickly dispelled, as at a given signal people ran towards King William-street. Men losing self-control in the excitement of the moment, hurried rather unwilling members of the weaker sex along at a trotting pace. The fire had an awe-inspiring appearance from here. No locality could be decided upon, and it seemed that the biggest portion of the King William - Rundle-st. - North terrace block was alight. "Good God, all the town will burn, don't go nearer," sobbed an over-wrought woman to her husband, and indeed, judging by appearances, she might well have been excused for her prediction. Everybody ran, some away, but nearly all towards the fire. "I have never seen a big fire yet," said a young girl to her cavalier. "Is it not lovely? Let us go and see it closer." But before they got near King William-street she changed her mind and went home frightened. Flames were leaping 50 ft. above the building tops; dull booming sounds were heard, and constellations or myriad sparks shot skyward. A fairly strong wind was blowing from a point or two south of east, and this carried the sparks across King William-street, over the roofs of buildings between Hindley-street and North-terrace, nearly as far west as Morphett-street. It needed no professional eye to note the danger, and indeed, several minor blazes demanded the attention of the brigade. The crowd in the street swelled to many thousands. Some of the women, almost panic-stricken with fear, stood in places of great danger, fascinated and mesmerised by the entrancing beauty and awesomeness of the effects. Dense clouds of smoke rolled out of the doomed buildings, as from the mouth of a giant cannon. Each fresh burst was accompanied by a discharge of glowing cinders, and the cloud gleamed with light. The by-streets to the west-ward were illuminated by the incandescence, and along them people fled from the flying sparks. Men placed their wives and children to leeward, and marched towards the station with a watchful eye on the glowing coals that fell all round. Suddenly someone would dash towards another person and knock off a cinder before the fabric on which it rested burst into flame. By no means the least serious of the dangers was the possibility of people's clothes catching fire.

A Rain of Glowing Fire.

The scene on North-terrace near the railway-station struck terror to many a heart. At 10.30 there was a constant stream of glowing coals from the fire drifting over the Gresham and South Australian hotels and adjoining buildings into North-terrace. Many of the cinders were the size of pigeons' eggs, and there was obviously considerable danger to the buildings. The terrace became almost deserted as the shower increased in density. Cabs left the stand, and for a while people sheltered under protecting verandahs, fearful of venturing through the driving fire. Probably this was the most terrible aspect of the effects of the conflagration. The fire itself was not visible, and in the darkened, terrace the bright specks stood out like falling stars of great brilliance. One might well liken it to a glimpse of Pompeii at its final dissolution by the fire of Vesuvius. At North Adelaide and other elevated suburbs and from high buildings magnificent views of the fire were obtained. Splendid. Water Supply. Superintendent Rickwood was exceedingly pleased with the conduct and courage of his men. He, however, considered that the fire was only prevented from spreading by the easterly direction of the wind. "Had there been a northerly wind," he said, "the whole block of Marshall's must have gone, and all we could have done would have been to protect the shops on the south side of Rundle-street. Every appliance in the city and out-stations (North Adelaide, Unley, and Norwood) was in use, and we had 21 lines of hose working from the roofs of Bagot, Shakes, & Lewis' buildings, Marshall's furniture department in Stephens-place, the back of the doctors' premises on North-terrace, and from every vantage-point offered by the lanes running to the building. The material in the building was highly inflammable, and for an hour after we received the first call the fight was an exceedingly strenuous one, and the result hung in the balance. At a quarter to 11 we had the conflagration well under control, and there was no danger of its spreading. The fire from the point of view of risk was the biggest I can remember in the city, for had the wind been in the wrong direction, the whole of one of the most

valuable blocks in Adelaide would have gone. Fortunately the water supply was excellent. Had it not been so the fight would have been much harder, and almost hopeless."

Statement by Mr. Fowler.

Mr. J. R. Fowler, chairman of directors of the company, watched the progress of the fire with deep concern. He stood in the lane at the side of the King William-street office, and gazed thoughtfully at the roaring inferno. Two or three times his anxiety seemed almost to overcome him, and he strode to within a few yards of the western wall, which the crowd were expecting at any moment to collapse. On many occasions he was cautioned not to take unnecessary risks lest he be caught by falling masonry. "Tut, tut," he said, "the wall is forty inches thick. It will never fall." But nevertheless the heavy masonry bulged menacingly and as if to show the danger Mr. Rickwood, in directing operations, twice called the men from under this portion of the building. Once the fire was under control Mr. Fowler readily consented to be interviewed, and invited a representative of "The Chronicle" in his office. He said he had, of course, no idea how the fire originated. "So far as I can find out at the present time," he continued, "the store was closed down at about 6 o'clock or a little after. Sub-sequent to that time there was no one in it. It is a general merchandise and grocery store, with three stories and a basement. It is freehold, and we occupy the whole of it, extending through to Marshall's buildings and Stephens-place. A lane separates us from Marshall's. This building is right in the heart of a big block We have Marshalls on the east and Donald-sons on the south. Dr. Marten and other doctors on the north, and Bagot, Shakes, and Lewis on the west. As you will see there is a clean sweep of the building and contents. The stock is worth between £19,000 and £20,000. I cannot say what the value of the building is, nor can I estimate the total loss, as the King William-street offices and the building at the rear are valued together. It is not quite a square block. There are practically two buildings. The one you can see from King William-street along the lane is, roughly speaking, 80 ft. by 60 ft., and behind that there is another block 83 ft. by 60 ft. The building is of stone, and the floors are wooden, and only one inside wall exists, this dividing the two blocks." When questioned as to the cause of such a remarkable number of sparks., Mr. Fowler said he could offer no explanation. There were no fireworks or explosives in the building. The quantity of kerosine was limited by municipal regulations, which were strictly observed. There were per-haps, 50 cases in the building. The booming noises heard during the fire he ascribed to the tinned stuff bursting. The upper part of the building was used for storage of broken packages; the ground floor for bulk.

WHAT DAYLIGHT REVEALED.

Long after midnight on Monday, when the last of the crowd who gathered about lanes leading to the doomed store of Messrs. D. & J. Fowler had left for their homes, and only the firemen and constables remained, volumes of smoke and dust, assisted by a stiff wind, continued to obscure objects at the corner of King William-street and North-terrace, and fill the rooms of those adjacent buildings, the windows of which had been left open. Throughout the night eight firemen were on duty, turning streams of water wherever flames, suddenly finding an opening beneath the debris, shot out and begun consuming whatever was not too much saturated with water to burn. As dawn approached and the milkman and other early risers started to congregate round the scene of the fire, the gates of the lanes were closed. Between 8 and 9 there was a large crowd of eager onlookers in King William-street, but all they could see was the tall rubble wall laced with brick, in places blackened by the fire, and a fireman on a heap of black debris —the burnt tins, which once contained lard, rolls of paper, nuts, boxes of cocoa, &c. — holding the nozzle of the hose in the direction of the smouldering ruins. But from a closer view a more accurate estimate of the magnitude of the fire could be made. Twisted by the intense heat, iron columns had crashed to the ground, tearing away with them from the wall the iron girders they supported. The girders had lodged in the most perilous positions. The end of one was hidden in the rubbish piled up on the floor, while the opposite extremity rested on a frail beam, looking as if only a little strength would be required to make it topple over on the men below. Iron rods had been twisted into curious shapes with just as much ease as one would twist a thin piece of wire rope. Wherever the eye reached was seen

a pile of black, smouldering rubbish, here and there being an article one could distinguish; wires and rods hanging loosely to charred beams, from every position the background being cracked walls. From the yard of Dr. Humphrey Marten's home on North-terrace bare walls only could be seen, though the people there assembled did not fail to notice the narrowness of the escape from destruction of the adjoining outbuildings. In the lane at the rear of the store where it adjoins Messrs. James Marshall and Co.'s boot department an idea was obtained of the enormous damage which would have resulted had the wind been from the north or west. A nest of buildings is there, and had they caught fire the efforts of the firemen to save them must have been fruitless. As the building was viewed from different positions, it was noticed that the structures in the vicinity were not even scorched. One was impressed with the wisdom which directed that the walls should be of brick or stone. It was the brick and stone walls which enabled the brigade to prevent the fire from spreading. A solid wall divides the establishments of Messrs. D. & J. Fowler and Messrs. James Marshall & Co. but this did not prevent a large volume of water percolating through. There was more than 6 ft. of it in Fowler's store, but in Marshall & Co.'s basement the depth was not nearly so great. With buckets a number of the latter firm's employes set to work early to bale out the water. It had entered several departments and damaged the goods. Mr. James Marshall was not in a position to say how much money would have to be spent in repairing the damage. With their collars off, their shirt sleeves turned back, and the legs of their trousers rolled up, the shop assistants seemed to enjoy the change of work. A few yards farther down the steam fire engine was at work. It was started shortly after 11 o'clock, and through two lines of hose a large volume of water was soon being removed from the basement into the gutter in Stephens-place. Later in the afternoon the engine was re-moved to the front of the store, and the water was pumped on to North-terrace. At 6 o'clock the engine was hard at work, and there was still 2 ft. of water to be pumped out. As far as could be ascertained, the only portion of Messrs. D. & J. Fowler's building not destroyed was a cellar capable of holding 1,200 gallons of kerosine. Situated at the rear of the building, in the northern corner, its thick walls are constructed of brick, and the doors of iron. The representatives of the firm were not able to state the quantity of oil in the cellar. The building, machinery, and fittings were insured with the Alliance Insurance Co. for £26,000. The attention of the firemen at about 7 a.m. was directed to the roof of Messrs. D. & J. Fowler's offices, situated in front of the store. They found some electric wires had fused. The flames were quickly extinguished.

Three Other Fires.

The sparks that swept over King William-street were always a source of fear to the firefighters, for there was a possibility of fresh outbreaks occurring elsewhere. Thanks to a keen outlook kept by the caretaker of the A.M.P. Buildings, two fires that had the potentialities of big conflagrations were noticed in time and checked. One was on the top of the building in Gresham-street occupied by Messrs. Frearson Bros., printers and lithographers. A projecting arm of wood, used with a pulley to raise goods from below, smouldered and burst into flame, but a fireman, called by Constable W. D. Byrne, scaled the roof from North-terrace and chopped off the piece of wood before the flames could creep along it to the inside of the building. The other fire in Gresham-street was on the roof of Messrs. Gollin & Co.'s premises, where a spark got under the eaves and caught the ridge capping. Several cooling screens hanging at the back of the Adelaide Club caught alight soon after the fire began, and had to be torn down and destroyed. All through four men were kept on the top of the club roof, which had just been painted., hosing it, and Mr. Douglas King gave a hand as well. The damage at the club is estimated at £30 or £40.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Monday 27 November 1911, page 4

GOVERNOR AT FIRE BRIGADE STATION.

Distribution of Medals.

His Excellency the Governor Sir Day Bosanquet inspected the head station of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade on Monday morning. A guard of honour, drawn from the staff, was

drawn up at the entrance to the station in Wakefield street, and His Excellency, who was accompanied by the Premier (Hon. J. Verran), the Chief Secretary (Hon. F. S. Wallis), and the Minister of Industry (Hon. J. P. Wilson), was received by Superintendent Rickwood and the members of the Fire Brigade Board —Messrs. E. Frinsdorf (Chairman). Ponder, M.P., F. C. Krichauff. D. T. Lawes, J. H. Cooke, B. A. Paxton, and F. W. Bristowe (Secretary). The proceedings began with a display of some of the appliances. Two motor engines, three horse-reels, the 60-ft. ladder. and the salvage van were brought out, and went by first at a trot, and afterwards at the gallop along the broad thoroughfare of Wakefield street. His Excellency inspected the men's apartments, stables, workshops, and gymnasium, and the party were subsequently treated to a splendid gymnastic display in the yard by squads of firemen under Foreman Butler, and to exhibitions of rescue work with the ladder, rope slings, jumping sheet, and smoke helmet.

—Distribution of Long-service Medals.—

At the close of the display, the brigade force, assembled in the gymnasium, where His Excellency presented long-service medals to eight of the officers who had been associated with the brigade for more than 10 years. The Chairman of the Board (Cr. Finsdorf) said since His Excellency last visited the station considerable improvements had been made. The gymnasium had been completed, and the men's quarters had been improved. The dormitory system had been abolished, and at present there were only two men in each room. The board had done its best to make the home life of the men better, and that accounted much for the excellent discipline. They men were always ready for duty, and at Fowler's fire those on leave and the auxiliaries at the theatres all turned up as soon as they learned of the fire. The interstate authorities at the recent congress had acknowledged that though the Adelaide station was small in comparison with some of the others, its equipment was ahead of the rest. His Excellency would be glad to learn that fully 70 per cent. of the men had received their early training as seamen, and the discipline thus learned was invaluable in connection with the fire brigade. The board last year had decided that married men who were not in quarters should receive an extra 5/ a week to compensate them for the rent they had to pay, and all the men were given four hours' extra leave every fourth day. There were no more contented men in any brigade. His Excellency presented long-service medals to District-Officer Napier (Port Adelaide), Foreman Bland (Norwood), Foreman Horicks (Gawler), Foreman Butler (headquarters), and Senior-Fireman Tyson (Port Adelaide) and Robertson, Teague and Woods (head station). Sir Day in thanking the Chairman for the welcome, said he would like, as an old sailor, to commend the men on the exhibition of physical training he had witnessed. It was a great thing for men as a mental and moral discipline, and for hardening and strengthening the muscles. It raised the men in their own esteem, fit-tered them for emergency, enabled them to do their work well, and made them look to their honour in a way that redounded not only on themselves, but towards their comrades. It had been a pleasure to again see the ropes and men using them as they ought to be used. He congratulated the brigade on the proof given of their efficiency, and on the contentment which seemed to pervade the whole establishment. He was glad of that opportunity to repeat in public the observations he had made to the superintendent in his letter of November 21. The gallant behaviour of the men at the great fire at Fowler's store merited their appreciation and acknowledgment. Their resolution and perseverance had been the means of preventing the fire from spreading, and confining it to the original locality. The tremendous heat in which the men had been called upon to work, and the protracted nature of the outbreak, had called for the display of physical endurance and hardihood which had been admirably responded to. The absence of any serious accident had been evidence of the foresight and judgment which had guided the control of the whole situation. Therefore he offered his sincere congratulations to the brigade upon its excellent behaviour, and upon the success of its efforts on that occasion. (Applause.) Supt. Rickwood, in thanking His Excellency, said it was no one individual, but the working together of all that had brought the brigade to its high efficiency. They were assured that whenever there was a job on every man would do his best. Since/ Fowler's fire congratulations had been received by the brigade from the Governor and the

various municipalities and insurance companies, and donations also from Messrs. D. & J. Fowler, James Marshall and Co., Dr. Marten, and the Adelaide Club. The Premier paid a high tribute to the efficiency of the brigade, which he said might fairly console itself upon being the only class of men in the community who were satisfied. (Laughter.) The work of the firemen, like that of the miner and sailor, was risky, but the qualities they learned through their discipline tended to make them all the better citizens. He was sure they had that confidence in and respect for their superintendent which he had expressed toward them, and that they were prepared to do and dare for him. The Chief Secretary (as head of the department) congratulated the brigade on its work in connection with Fowlers fire. Their performance on that occasion was one of which any body of men might be proud.

Evening Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1869 - 1912), Monday 27 November 1911, page 4

FIRE HOSES CUT.

Men's lives Endangered.

In connection with the visit of His Excellency the Governor (Sir Day Bosanquet) to the Metropolitan Fire Brigade on Monday. Superintendent Rickwood, in the course of an address, said that on the previous Monday night, when testing the hoses after Fowlers fire, it was found that several lengths had been deliberately prodded with knives. He did not know the individuals who had done such a contemptible action, but it would not have been good for them if he had met them at the time. A fireman standing on a wall or in any place of danger was dependent for his life on the jet of water keeping up its pressure, for he had to strain forward to hold the weight, and if through a cut or burst the pressure suddenly slackened, he might be thrown back and killed or seriously injured. The individual who stuck a knife into a hose did not, apparently, know what was likely to occur as the result. The injury had been probably caused by some irresponsible persons who had "lost their block," as the saying went; but it was a terrible thing in its potentiality for harm. The Premier (Hon. J. Verran) subsequently referred to the incident. He would not like to think that any one who belonged to South Australia would deliberately cut the hose at a fire. He preferred to think it was some foreigner with no conception of his duty to the public. Such a person was certainly a menace to society, and would not be treated lightly if caught in the act.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Monday 27 November 1911, page 4

THE FIRE BRIGADE.

Congratulations from the Governor.

Among the thousands of spectators who admired the work of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade on the occasion of the conflagration at Messrs D. & J. Fowlers warehouse was his Excellency the Governor. On Monday morning his Excellency inspected the fireman at the Adelaide station, and, in addressing the brigade remarked that he was glad to have the opportunity of repeating in public the observations he had made to Superintendent Rickwood in his letter of November 21. The gallant behaviour of the men at the great fire at Messrs D. & J. Fowler's store merited their appreciation and acknowledgment. Their resolution and perseverance had been the means of preventing the fire from spreading and confining it to the original locality. The tremendous heat in which the men had been called upon to work and the protracted nature of the outbreak had called for a display of physical endurance and hardihood which was admirably responded to. The absence of any serious accident had been evidence of the foresight and judgment which had guided the control of the whole situation. Therefore he offered his sincere congratulations to the brigade upon its excellent behaviour and upon the success of its efforts upon that occasion.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Tuesday 28 November 1911, page 9

GOVERNOR AT FIRE BRIGADE STATION.

Distribution of Medals. His Excellency the Governor (Sir Day Bosanquet) inspected the head station of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade on Monday morning. A guard of honour from the staff was drawn up at the entrance to the station in Wakefield street, and His Excellency, who was accompanied by the Premier (Hon. J. Verran), the Chief Secretary (Hon. F. S. Wallis), and the Minister of Industry (Hon. J. P. Wilson), was received by Superintendent Rickwood and the members of the Fire Brigade Board —Messrs. E. Frinsdorf (Chairman), Ponder. M.P., F. C. Krichauff, D. T. Lawes, J. H. Cooke, E. A. Paxton, and F. W. Bristowe (Secretary). The proceedings began with a display of some of the appliances. Two motor engines, three horse reels, the 60-ft. ladder, and the salvage van were brought out, and went by first at a trot, and afterwards at the gallop along the broad thoroughfare of Wakefield street. His Excellency inspected the men's apartments, stables, workshops, and gymnasium, and the party were subsequently treated to a splendid gymnastic display in the yard by squads of firemen under Foreman Butler, and to exhibitions of rescue work with the ladder, rope slings, jumping sheet, and smoke helmet.

— Distribution of Long-service Medals.—

At the close of the display, the brigade force assembled in the gymnasium, where His Excellency presented long-service medals to eight of the officers who had been associated with the brigade for more than 10 years. The Chairman of the Board (Cr. Frinsdorf) said since His Excellency last visited the station considerable improvements had been made. The gymnasium had been completed, and the men's quarters had been improved. The dormitory system had been abolished, and at present there were only two men in each room. The board had done its best to make the home life of the men better, and that accounted much for the excellent discipline. The men were always ready for duty, and at Fowler's fire those on leave and the auxiliaries at the theatres all turned up as soon as they learned of the fire. The interstate authorities at the recent congress had acknowledged, that though the Adelaide station was small in comparison with some of the others, its equipment was ahead of the rest. His Excellency would be glad to learn that fully 70 per cent. of the men had received their early training as seamen, and the discipline thus learned was invaluable in connection with the fire brigade. The board last year had decided that married men who were not in quarters should receive an extra 5/ a week to compensate them for the rent they had to pay, and all the men were given four hours' extra leave every fourth day. There were no more contented men in any brigade. His Excellency presented long-service medals to District-Officer Napier (Port Adelaide), Foreman Bland (Norwood), Foreman Horicks (Gawler), Foreman Butler (headquarters), and Senior-Firemen Tyson (Port Adelaide) and Robertson, Teague and Woods (head station). Sir Day, in thanking the Chairman for the welcome, said he would like, as an old sailor, to commend the men on the exhibition of physical training he had witnessed. It was a great thing for them as a mental and moral discipline, and for hardening and strengthening the muscles. It raised the men in their own esteem, fit-ted them for emergency, enabled them to do their work well, and made them look to their honour in a way that redounded, not only on themselves, but towards their comrades. It had been a pleasure to again see the ropes and men using them as they ought to be used. He congratulated the brigade on the proof given of their efficiency, and on the contentment which seemed to pervade the whole establishment. He was glad of that opportunity to repeat in public the observations he had made to the superintendent in his letter of November 21. The gallant behaviour of the men at the great fire at Fowler's store merited their appreciation and acknowledgment. Their resolution and perseverance had been the means of preventing the fire from spreading, and confining it to the original locality. The tremendous heat in which the men had been called upon to work, and the protracted nature of the outbreak, had called for the display of physical endurance and hardihood which had been admirably responded to. The absence of any serious accident had been evidence of the foresight and judgment which had guided the control of the whole situation. Therefore he offered his sincere congratulations to the brigade upon its excellent behaviour, and upon the success of its efforts on that occasion. (Applause.) Supt. Rickwood, in thanking His Excellency, said it was no one individual, but the working together of all that had brought the brigade to its high efficiency.

They were assured that whenever there was a job on every man would do his best. Since Fowler's fire congratulations had been received by the brigade from the Governor and the various municipalities and insurance companies, and donations also from Messrs. D. & J. Fowler, James Marshall and Co., Dr. Marten, and the Adelaide Club. The Premier paid a high tribute to the efficiency of the brigade, which he said might fairly console itself upon being the only class of men in the community who were satisfied. (Laughter.) The work of the firemen, like that of the miner and sailor, was risky, but the qualities they learned through their discipline tended to make them all the better citizens. He was sure they had that confidence in and respect for their superintendent which he had expressed toward them, and that they were prepared to do and dare for him. (Applause.) The Chief Secretary (as head of the department) congratulated the brigade on its work in connection with Fowler's fire. Their performance on that occasion was one of which any body of men might be proud.

Sport (Adelaide, SA : 1911 - 1948), Saturday 2 December 1911, page 7

Fire!

The discontented people who say that 'nothing ever happens in Adelaide' had enough gratuitous excitement provided on Monday night by the disastrous fire at D. & J. Fowlers to last for a few weeks. Except an earthquake or a waterspout there is nothing strikes terrors to a man's brain and heart like a huge warehouse on fire. If he have any personal interest in the doomed structure, either as employee or part owner, he experiences a nerve strain that makes him sicken at the cry of 'fire!' the rest of his life. When the doomed building contains inflammable goods like Fowlers bulk store the task of saving it is soon recognised as hopeless and the smartest fire brigade can only attempt to keep it within bounds. When watching the Herculean efforts of the brigade on Monday night one wondered that there should exist in this enlightened city everyone brainless enough to maliciously raise a false alarm. Yet there are a few such idiots about, as the local brigade know to their sorrow. If the mutton-headed jokers' own home was burned to the ground while the brigade was vainly chasing on account of the said jokers false alarm, it might bring the enormity of his crime home to him. Apart from the inhuman exasperating cruelty of arousing firemen out of bed on a false alarm, the danger of a huge genuine blaze like that of Fowlers' breaking out while the brigade was on a wild-goose chase, ought to be sufficient to deter any alleged man from ever perpetrating a false alarm. The only consoling feature of an enormous fire is the satisfactory news item it makes for the daily press. It also provides the vacuous minded man in the street with a subject of conversation. He tells of other cities he has been in and compares the fire (generally disparagingly) with others he has seen. Then the local resident indignantly resurrects tales of ancient fires in this city and so the ghoulish reminiscences go on.

Adelaideans feel important,
Adelaide has had a fire!
Sometimes too she has an earthquake,
Gaining her supreme desire.

Other Cities have their earthquakes,
Startling happenings—not a few,
Murders, Strikes, and devastations,
Why not little Adelaide too?

Rob her not of her importance,
Send out cables, near and far!
Such a fire is worth recording—
Adelaide's happenings always are!

Mr W. Young, S.A. Fire Brigade and Chief electrician



State Library of South Australia - Mr. W. Young [B 40278], Mr W. Young, S.A. Fire Brigade and Chief electrician. 1911. Part of Portrait Collection.