

Adelaide Fire Brigade 1917

Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1912 - 1923), Saturday 20 January 1917, page 4

FIRE AT THE HOSPITAL

At an early hour on Friday Morning, the Metropolitan Fire Brigade responded to a call to an outbreak of fire in the Adelaide Hospital grounds. Hot ashes had set some dry leaves alight. No damage was done.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Monday 5 February 1917, page 6

FIRE AT NORWOOD.

The Norwood Fire Brigade received a summons from the alarm at the Norwood Post Office on Saturday at 3.53 p.m. Two men, under Foreman Mason, quickly turned out, and found that the rear portion of the premises of Mr. H. Denton, a butcher, on the Parade, was ablaze. The cause of the outbreak is attributed to the fact that Mr. W. Robertson (a brother-in-law of Mr. Denton) was engaged close to the stables in boiling tar, which boiled over and caused a big blaze. A motor shed and the stables were completely burned, and a delivery horse was incinerated. Two other horses which were in the same stable were fortunately rescued without having received injuries. When the fire was discovered by Mrs. Denton her first thought was for the safety of the imprisoned animals, and she courageously entered the stables and released them from the ropes by which they were secured to the stalls. A loft and its contents (a ton of chaff), two delivery carts, 2 tons of wool, and three sets of harness were also destroyed. In taking his motor car from the shed Mr. Denton received an injury to the left arm from the flames. He estimates his loss at £200, which is not covered by insurance owing to the policy having expired last week. Slight damage was also done to the adjoining property of Mrs. V. M. Mackay. Station Officer Tyson, of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, with four men assisted the local brigade in extinguishing the conflagration, and assistance was also rendered by the Rose Park Boy Scouts.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Wednesday 21 February 1917, page 4

ACCIDENT TO A FIRE-REEL.

A false alarm of fire was received by the brigade at about 9.50 a.m. on Wednesday, and as a motor reel was proceeding along Gawler-place in response to the call, the wheels skidded along the wet pavement. As a result, the vehicle crashed into the verandah of the Oriental, Hotel, smashing two posts and two large mirrors. Three of the firemen were thrown, on to the footpath, but were uninjured.

Critic (Adelaide, SA : 1897-1924), Wednesday 28 February 1917, page 3

MEMBERS METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADE, HEAD STATION, FEBRUARY, 1917.



Top Row—Firemen W. J. West, G. C. Wilson, T. M. Davis, H. Warhurst, F. N. Fry, E. Oakley, L. G. Brice, H. T. Weir. Second Row—Firemen R. Morris, W. Woodcock, S. C. Ferors, W. Young, D. W. Johnstone, J. Jones, D. R. Robertson, J. Gibson, A. McCallum. Third Row—Firemen E. M. Angas, W. G. Stewart, Foreman H. T. Sayers, Station Officer W. Tyson, Deputy Chief Officer G. P. Cooper, Station Officer A. Griffen, Foreman T. C. Booth, Firemen J. B. Hocking, E. Godfrey. Front Row—Firemen A. E. Abery, J. S. Parrott, L. L. Bennett, H. Lindsay. ["Critic" photo.]

Daily Herald (Adelaide, SA : 1910 - 1924), Saturday 10 March 1917, page 7

FIRE AT NORTH ADELAIDE
CHAFF MILLS DESTROYED.

About 3.21 last night the North Adelaide Fire Brigade received a call to Kimber's chaff mills, in Centenary street, off Tynte street, North Adelaide. Upon arrival, it was found that the building, which contained inflammable stock, was well alight. The first motor engine from the city station was requisitioned. and a powerful stream of water was brought to play on the flames. It was impossible to subdue the fire before considerable damage was done to the premises, and the efforts of the firemen were directed to keeping it in check. The building was practically gutted. The cause of the outbreak has not been ascertained.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Friday 13 April 1917, page 4

A FIRE ALARM.

Excitement in King William-street.

An alarm of fire, which, proved to be false, was given shortly after 2 p.m. on Friday. An exciting incident occurred in King William-street, near, the corner of Hindley-street, during the progress of the brigade's appliances through the city. A great crowd of people rapidly assembled after the motor reel had gone by. A two-horse reel, carrying several firemen, was proceeding along the thoroughfare at a swing-gallop, and when abreast of Industrial Buildings one of the horses slipped and fell to the wood-paving. The vehicle was travelling at such a fast rate that the animal was dragged between 15 and 20 yards before the reel came to a standstill. The horse was cut about the body as the result of the dragging, but was soon able to resume the journey.

Daily Herald (Adelaide, SA : 1910 - 1924), Saturday 14 April 1917, page 4

FALSE ALARM OF FIRE.

Some excitement was caused in King William street shortly after 2 o'clock yesterday. When proceeding along King William street in response to an alarm, which afterwards proved to be false, part of the brigade's appliance met with a mishap. Near the corner of Hindley street a two horse reel, carrying several firemen, was moving rapidly when one of the horses slipped and fell. Owing to the rate at which the vehicle was travelling the horse was dragged between 15 and 20 yards. The horse was cut about the body, but was not severely hurt.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Saturday 14 April 1917, page 8

FIRE BRIGADE HORSES SLIPPED.

In answer to a call from the Cheer-up Hut shortly after 2 p.m. on Friday, the Metropolitan Fire Brigade reel promptly responded, and as it was proceeding along King William street, and had reached the intersection of Hindley street, one of the horses drawing the conveyance slipped, on account of the greasy nature of the road consequent upon downpours of rain, and in endeavouring to right itself dragged the other animal down with it. The driver skilfully manipulated the prostrate beasts, and dismounting promptly had them on their feet again sharply. The men quickly reharnessed the horses, and continued on their way, having lost little time by the misadventure. The alarm proved to be a false one.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Thursday 3 May 1917, page 9

FIRE IN RUNDLE STREET.

At about 11.15 on Wednesday morning an alarm of fire was given from Rundle street east. Two reels were immediately dispatched from the Metropolitan Station, and it was discovered that a blaze had begun in an upholstery shop occupied by Mr. T. Grace. Several bales of fibre had become ignited— it is thought by a little boy playing with matches. The brigade had no difficulty in extinguishing the fire before much damage had been done. The premises are owned by William Charlick, Limited.

Mail (Adelaide, SA : 1912 - 1954), Saturday 12 May 1917, page 7

THE HARLEY CLUB VISITS THE FIRE BRIGADE.

On Tuesday evening last about 100 members and friends visited that popular spot in Wakefield street —the Fire Brigade. If any one has not seen over this station he has really missed a treat, for from the time a visitor first enters the doors it is one continual whirl of fresh sights. Different members of the brigade courteously conducted parties around, and explained in detail all the fire-fighting appliances. The manner in which the fire engines, ladders, and various machines are kept reflects the greatest credit on the superintendent and men, and shows what system really is. Everything is done to tick and time. The brass work rivalled mirrors. A feature that never fails to draw attention is the horses. They are real beauties, sleek and splendidly groomed, manes well curled and cared for. In fact, their beds were fit for human beings. Above each stall is the name of the horse. One of the animals was a hurdle racer in past years. Every department proved interesting to the sight-seers, even to the kitchen. The men are well provided with amusements to while away the time. They have a billiard room, gymnasium, and tennis court, besides a nice little dance and club room fitted up with a stage. The Harley Club submitted a musical entertainment, in conjunction with items from the brigade boys. Those who contributed were Mrs. F. N. Baker, Misses Skuce, Mr. N. Ellis, Firemen Lindsay and Warhurst, Miss A. Riches, Fireman Ferrors, and Mr. Gordon Grant. Orchestral items were contributed by Mr. W. Sandercock's party, and were greatly appreciated. Refreshments were handed round by the firemen. The secretary of the club (Mr. P. Moody) thanked the officials for their kindness. Mr. Rowlands was responsible for the programme, which was well carried out.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Tuesday 15 May 1917, page 4

AN ALARM OF FIRE.

The Fire Brigade received a call from the corner of Currie-street and Gilbert-place at 10.27 a.m. on Tuesday to extinguish an outbreak at the premises of Mr. T. H. Holman, Hairdresser, Currie-street. The cause of the fire was stated to be a short circuit of the current supplying the electric light. About a square foot of the ceiling was burnt.

Daily Herald (Adelaide, SA : 1910 - 1924), Tuesday 22 May 1917, page 2

ALARM OF FIRE

OUTBREAK IN KING WILLIAM STREET.

There was a sudden alarm of fire in King William street between Currie and Waymouth streets, about 9 o'clock last night, when some passers saw smoke issuing from the premises of Mr. S. J. Blitz, 105, King William street.

The fire brigade was called by telephone. Fortunately the firemen were quickly on the scene, and the blaze was smartly subdued. It had broken out in a matchboard partition which was slightly burnt through, the dry wood having been well alight. The cause of the outbreak is unknown.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Thursday 31 May 1917, page 4

A BIG FIRE

EXPLOSIONS CAUSE ALARM

EXTENSIVE DAMAGE

FIREMAN AND POLICEMEN INJURED.

The premises of Messrs. Gambling and McDonald, carriers, stores occupied by Hooper's Furnishing Arcade, and Mr. Walter's box factory, in Wakefield-street, between Hutt-street and Hanson-street, covering altogether about half an acre, were the scene this morning of a destructive fire, involving, it is feared, the loss of thousands of pounds worth of property. It is impossible to say precisely when the fire broke out, but it was first noticed soon after midnight.

The brigade was in attendance at about 12.30, by which time the fire had obtained a strong hold, and the flames were rising to a great height. The inmates of a neighboring house were awakened at about that time by a loud explosion, followed at intervals of about five minutes by five more heavy reports, reminding a soldier who had lately returned from the war of a shelling in the trenches. The explosions were caused by the destruction of large tubes containing ammonia, used in connection with the — — in Messrs. Gambling & McDonald's premises. The glass in the windows of several houses was smashed by the concussion into the smallest fragments. The feelings of the occupants of the houses may be imagined. They rushed out of their houses, and in a few minutes the street was thronged.

The property destroyed included furniture, a large quantity of timber in the box factory, many piano cases and other goods stored with the carrying firm. By the time the flames were got under control the premises were gutted, and all their contents were reduced to ashes, with the exception of Hooper's, which was partly saved. The fire lasted about an hour.

Constable Rogers and Fireman West were injured in one of the explosions, and had to be removed to the Adelaide Hospital by Constables Gill and Ferguson, in Mr. S. Honeydew's taxicab. They were suffering from shock, and were admitted to the institution. Constable Judd received cuts about the legs, and Constable Sweeney was struck by a piece of iron, but the two last named were not seriously injured.

The firefighters deserve the greatest commendation for their admirable work in attacking the fire.

A cyclist was passing the place soon after the fire broke out, and just then the first explosion took place. This so startled the cyclist that he lost control of his machine, and fell heavily on the roadway. He received no serious injury.

SEVERE EXPLOSIONS.

FIREMEN'S GOOD WORK.

The first signs of the fire were noticed by Constable W. L. Parsons, who was on duty in Hutt-street, a few hundred yards from the scene. At 12.10 a.m. he saw a glow, and white smoke rising in the vicinity of Our Boys' Institute. The constable immediately gave the alarm to the brigade from the Wakefield-street corner, and loudly sounded his whistle. The firemen were on the scene, according to his calculation, within two minutes, and with great alacrity had run out a line of hose. Just as they were getting the water turned on the first explosion occurred, followed at brief intervals by the four others. The third and fourth explosions were the most severe, and broke the windows of houses on the northern side of Wakefield-street, 100 yards distant. Sheets of iron from the burning premises were hurled in all directions, and debris shot up 70 or 80 ft. in the air. With each concussion the crowd was growing in magnitude, but with the exception of a few reckless individuals, who had to be pressed back by the police, most of the people watched the blaze from a safe distance. The crowd was mainly concentrated in Wakefield-street. For about a quarter of a mile in each direction the thoroughfare was lined with motor cars, motor cycles, and horse-drawn vehicles. Some of the motorists had come in from distant suburbs. The principal curiosity was evinced in the cause of the explosions, which were generally attributed to the combustion of large quantities of benzine. Those who gave expression to this theory were not aware that cylinders of ammonia or carbonic acid gas were stored in the burning sheds.

The brigade had got the fire practically under by 1 a.m. Two lines of hose were working from Wakefield-street, two from Angas-street, and one from Cardwell-street. Superintendent Dickey, in conversation with a reporter, stated that the flames were going right through the premises of Messrs. Gambling & McDonald when the engines arrived. Hooper's furniture factory was pretty well unscathed, so far as he could tell. The men had been working in there to keep the fire out. The explosion which injured two members of the brigade and Constable Rogers, also knocked over Commander Burford, the district naval officer, who happened to be a spectator, and was giving a hand to the brigade. Commander Burford did not appear to be hurt by his experience. The fire destroyed a great deal of general merchandise stored in Messrs. Gambling and McDonald's premises.

The Police Report.

In his report to the city watchhouse Constable Parsons stated that while on duty in Flinders-street he saw ten minutes after midnight dense smoke arising from the direction of Wakefield-street. Proceeding thither he observed a fire in Messrs. Gambling & McDonald's premises. He gave the alarm and the brigade turned out promptly. A quantity of benzine and ammonia were stacked in different parts of the building, all of which was on fire. There were five loud explosions. The building was completely wrecked some iron sheets being hurled 150 ft. into the air. Constables Judd and Rogers, who were injured, were requested by firemen to assist in getting a hose nearer to the fire, and were doing so when an explosion occurred. Constable Rogers was knocked down by flying bricks, and Constable Judd was hit in the leg. Both officers were taken to the Adelaide Hospital, whence, later, Constable Judd was removed to his home in the police ambulance.

Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1912 - 1923), Thursday 31 May 1917, page 1

AFTER THE BLAZE.

SCENE OF DESOLATION.

Like a German Raid.

The immense blaze in Wakefield street at midnight on Wednesday resulted in considerable loss and damage, and seen in the morning light on Thursday a picture of devastation was presented. Occurring, as it did, in the heart of the city, and accompanied by the terrific explosions, which shook houses in the vicinity and shattered many windows, it attracted hundreds of eager sightseers, and for hours in the morning people were gathered in Wakefield street gazing at the skeleton wreck of the buildings which had been gutted. The property—where the blaze was chiefly confined is rented by Messrs. T. J. Richards and Sons, carriage and motor builders, who lease a part of the premises to Messrs. Gambling & McDonald. It difficult to ascertain the full extent of the damage, but the fact that half a dozen motors and seven or eight motor cycles belonging to the former firm, and two motor lorries used by Messrs. Gambling & Mcdonald, were completely destroyed, together with, it is understood, about 30 pianos, which had been stored for the Pianola Company, and other valuable articles which were in store, is an indication of the loss sustained. Mr. Richards estimated his loss at between £2,000 and £2,500, because apart from the motor car cycles there was a considerable quantity of accessories. He was afraid that the contents were not all covered by insurance.

—Cause of the Explosions.—

Considerable uncertainty prevailed while the blaze was at its height concerning the cause of the explosions. Naturally rumours were rife, especially in the suburbs, of a hostile bombardment. Some idea of the force of the detonations may be gathered from the fact that even so far distant as Largs Bay the dull, reverberating thuds could clearly be heard, and dogs in the neighbourhood and startled poultry added their quota to the disturbance. Many people entertained hysterical fears regarding what the explosions signified, and that big guns were being fired somewhere out at sea was a generally accepted theory, which led to considerable consternation. The Naval Commandant (Commander Burford), who was quickly on the scene of the outbreak, at first favoured the idea of high explosives having been burnt by the tremendous heat, and, indeed, the noise was not unlike that of a bursting shell. It was ascertained on Thursday morning, however, that five or six large ammonia cylinders used for freezing purposes, which had been stored in the premises for a considerable period, had caused the detonations. Mr. A. Rowe, waterworks turncock, was one of the first to realize the danger which the huge "bottles" presented. After the first explosion, he noticed a number of them near one of the walls not far distant from Wakefield street. The cylinder had been ripped open, and was standing upright half-buried in the debris. He immediately passed a warning to several firemen who were standing on the wall some yards away to remain as much as possible under cover, and the men were advised to keep the water as long as could be managed from coming into contact with the redhot bottles. He explained that the sudden application of cold water would immediately cause the cylinders to explode, and some idea of the tremendous force contained in them may be gathered from the fact that one, almost intact, and measuring in length more than a man's height, was hurled through the air and landed on a roof in Little Caldwell street, situated about 300 yards away. Mr. Rowe stated on Thursday that he saw a huge mass hurtling through the flames and smoke, and later heard a crash as of a heavy body falling some distance away, and probably it was this mass of iron which he observed. Altogether five cylinders, flattened almost beyond recognition, were found in the vicinity, but, strangely enough, another four, all loaded and still intact, were still lying where their companions had exploded. One was leaking, and the overpowering smell of the ammonia gave some idea of the difficulties and dangers which faced the men from the brigade.

—Heroic Firemen.—

Too much praise cannot be paid to the resourcefulness and courage of the fire-men. With no idea when the next terrific explosion would occur, and in constant danger from falling debris,

they went about their duties steadfastly, and not only were they able to keep under control the fiercely burning mass where the conflagration originated, but the premises immediately adjoining on each side were almost wholly saved. The value of their work is all the more apparent from the fact that tons of woodwork lay in each of the buildings, and yet the blaze failed to secure a further hold. On one side was the factory of Hooper's Furnishing Arcade, where a considerable amount of furniture in course of preparation for the salerooms was stacked. On the other side, where B. Walters's and Sons have a box-making manufactory, dozens of cases and piles of timber would have offered ready fuel should a spark have alighted among them. Superintendent Dickie's arrangements however, disclosed good generalship. Men were stationed all round the burning building constantly playing water on the adjoining premises at points most like to be affected, and apart from the drenching which some of the articles received, little damage resulted. Each explosion lifted some portion of the blazing wreckage above the main building, and many were the narrow escapes of the fire fighters. It was no uncommon sight to see a mass of galvanized iron or a huge piece of timber hurtling through the air, and on one occasion, in a shower of sparks, a fireman was observed dodging a heap of falling debris, which fortunately tumbled around without touching him. The experience of three men who were standing on the wall and roof separating the centre block from that of Hooper's was a terrifying one. They were Firemen D. Robertson, E. Oakley, and N. Fry, and the force of one concussion threw the latter two off their balance, and Robertson, who miraculously was uninjured, looked round to find him-self alone in front of the roaring furnace. It seemed to them as though some giant hammer had crashed against the roof beneath them. Fry fell back with his hands before his eyes, and tumbled off the roof to the ground, a distance of about 12 or 14 ft. Oakley was most fortunate, as a stairway which gave access to their point of vantage saved him from falling, and apart from bruises he was little hurt.

—Interviews with the Injured.—

The story of this particular accident was told a reporter by Firemen Fry and W. West. The former, who twisted his left ankle and badly jarred his leg, stated that he and his companions were mounting the stairway just as one explosion occurred. West was passing a hose up to him, and he and Robertson were actually on the roof when there was another detonation. A third explosion seemed to lift the roof from under them, and he tumbled back. Firemen West, said he was on the stairway when Fry fell, and he immediately rushed to his comrade's assistance. He gave the injured man a drink of water from his helmet—"and nearly drowned him while I was doing it," as he laughingly expressed it— and then went back to his post. He was handing hose up the gangway when there was a fourth explosion. "The next thing I knew," he said, "I was under the staircase." His most serious injury comprised a badly jarred right leg between the knee and the foot, and the limb was considerably bruised and swollen. He was conveyed to the Adelaide Hospital, but on Thursday morning was able to be removed to the Fire Brigade Station, where he was confined to his bed. That the casualty list was not much heavier is a surprising circumstance, in view of the numerous dangers and disabilities. Falling timber and walls are some of the hazards ever associated with the fireman's calling, and when to those are added the possibilities of asphyxiation and the peril of masses of debris flying through the air like a barrage of artillery fire some idea can be coined of the stupendous nature of the task which these men had to face on Wednesday night. Many of the firemen had to perform their work in the fumes arising from the smashed cylinders, and these factors alone stamped the outbreak as one of the most serious which Adelaide has known for many years. The injured included Constable Frederick Rogers and Constable Peter Judd. The former, who was struck by bricks, was conveyed to the Adelaide Hospital, suffering from shock, and was detained. It was ascertained on Thurs-day that he was progressing favourably. Constable Judd was also taken to the Hospital, with a slight injury to one leg but subsequently he was removed to his home in the police ambulance.

—A Good Save.—

Mr. R. J. Lavis, proprietor of Hooper's Arcade, had cause to thank the brigade for its splendid efforts, and in conversation with a reporter on Thursday he made appreciative reference to the "good save" which had been effected. As a matter of fact, beyond the scorching of a couple of chairs near a window overlooking the inferno beneath the fire did little damage, although, of course, the partial flooding of the premises had its effect on some of the furniture. "There will be a few bargains to the public in this line," he said. The first floor of the building was used as one of the vantage-points for plying the hoses, and the blackened outside walls bore testimony to the tremendous heat and fury of the flames. The whole of the stock was covered by insurance. About 30 men employed at the factory arrived for their day's work at 7.30 a.m. on Thursday; but it was impossible then for a resumption of business, although Mr. Lavis assured his employes that they would be taken on again as quickly as possible. "We hope after a few hours delay to get going in full swing again," he said. A valuable lot of machinery in a shed furthest from the fire escaped altogether, and as the machines are valued at anything from £10 to £100 a piece, the save was an extremely fortunate one.

A Formidable Missile.

Over Hundredweight of Steel.

One of the most sensational features of the trench-like character of the fire was the bursting of the huge cylinders. These formidable missiles were thrown by the force of the explosion in all directions. One struck the side of an adjacent house, and shattered the windows, but another was carried between 150 and 200 yards, and fell with the crash of a bomb on the roof of a small house in Little Cardwell street. In its journey it passed over first a vacant allotment, then house, then after that a road and a small alley to the resting place across the top of the dwelling. The whole of the back portion of the roof has been driven in, and the sight of the spent and flattened cylinder, with its pointed nose projecting back at the fire, was an object of great curiosity on Thursday morning. Many hundreds of people visited the locality, and marvelled that nobody was either killed or injured seriously while the dangerous object was hurtling through the air or when it fell on the roof. "Was it the Germans, mother?" enquired a wondering and timid small boy as he held the hand of his parent and gazed up at the black intruder lying between the chimneys of this little villa. "Good 'eavens," exclaimed a neighbour, "We had fright enough last night, but what must they have had when that thing lobbed on the roof." "I suppose they thought it was a Zepp.," remarked another.

—A Closer View.—

A reporter climbed up for a closer inspection of the exploded cylinder. It rested in a dip which it had created by its force and weight, and seemed almost to be trembling on the brink of the little chasm underneath the torn galvanized iron. About 7 or 8 ft. long, and flattened out to a width of 3 or 4 ft., with a keen jagged edge, this grotesque bomb might have smashed its way through a regiment of soldiers. Several sheets of iron are hanging by their rivets, and the whole of the middle portion of the roof has been bent in. The occupier of the house (Mrs. G. Cooke), whose husband is a clerk in the office of Silbert, Sharp, & Bishop, conducted the pressman through the house. There was a scatter of plaster along the hall, and the ceiling there was cracked in many places. Similar evidence of the crash was visible in the bedroom, and several of the outer bedrooms were broken. Otherwise there was no disturbance of the scrupulous tidiness of the rooms.

—Like an Engine.—

"How did you feel?" Mrs. Cooke was asked. "We were outside at the time," she replied. "My husband and I had been awakened from sleep by the explosions at the fire. We heard two, and the third to be the one that brought that up there on the roof. I really thought the Germans had come—no joking. I did. We knew something had fallen near our place, but were under the impression that whatever it was it had dropped somewhere between the two houses. We went back to bed later on, but I can tell you I would not have done so if I had known that lump of steel was hanging over the bedroom. We did not discover that until this morning." "Did you

hear it coming?" "My word we did. It was like an engine dashing through the air, and made a terrible hissing noise. I thought the whole house was going to tumble in. No damage was done to my furniture. Nothing was even shaken out of place. Oh, yes the photograph of a soldier at the front was knocked off the overmantel in the front room, so, you see, it was like a German raid after all, wasn't it?"

The Next House to the Fire.

Heaps of Smashed Glass.

There were little heaps of broken glass in the yard of the house occupied by Mr. E. T. Challacombe, who lives next to where the fire occurred. There was hardly a whole pane left, either inside or out. The wonder that some of the inmates were not killed or injured. One of the exploded cylinders and several sheets of galvanized iron hit the western wall, and shattered the glass to scintillating powder. Even the mirror of the wardrobe was broken and pictures were damaged. The chimneys were so badly shaken that one on Thursday morning appeared to be depending for a foundation on a few displaced bricks. Mr. Challacombe was away on night work at the time, but his wife and children were in the house. They had a terrifying experience, but they were smiling, with white faces, in the aftermath. In another home adjacent to the fire a large piece of wood was driven through the window into a bed room, where a number of children were sleeping but it fell short of them. Every householder in the vicinity reported a tatto on their roofs, and there were marvellous escapes in abundance. "Now we are ready for a German air raid, announced a brave mother, around whom had huddled her little family right through the night. "It couldn't be much worse!" Several panes of glass in O.B.I. building were smashed, and bits of timber and steel were carried over the wide thoroughfare of Wakefield street and dropped with great force on the roofs and against the walls.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Friday 1 June 1917, page 8

THE WAKEFIELD-STREET FIRE.

To the Editor.

Sir—We notice on reading your description of the fire at Messrs. Gambling and McDonald's premises that your reporter states that explosions were caused by large tubes of ammonia used in connection with Prest-o-Lite. This is not only misleading, but likely to prove detrimental to the Prest-o-Lite business. Prest-o-Lite compressed acetylene gas tanks are absolutely non-explosive. The ammonia cylinders which exploded are used in connection with soda fountains and for making aerated waters.

We are, &c., CORNELL, LIMITED. Pirie-street, May 31, 1917.

Critic (Adelaide, SA : 1897-1924), Wednesday 6 June 1917, page 23

WAKEFIELD STREET FIRE.

People living in the neighborhood of Wakefield Street were alarmed last Wednesday night by the terrific explosions which shook houses in the vicinity and shattered many windows. A big crowd gathered in Wakefield Street, gazing at the wreck. The overpowering smell of ammonia gave some idea of the difficulties and dangers which faced the men from the brigade. The property where the blaze was chiefly confined is rented by Messrs. T. J. Richards & Sons, carriage and motor builders. Many people though the enemy was upon us, the sound of the explosions carrying so far.

Port Adelaide News (SA :1913 - 1933), Friday 8 June 1917, page 7

Wakefield Street Fire which occurred at midnight last Wednesday week



The property where the blaze was chiefly confined is rented by Messrs. T. J. Richards & Sons, carriage and motor builders, who lease a part of the premises to Messrs. Gambling & McDonald.

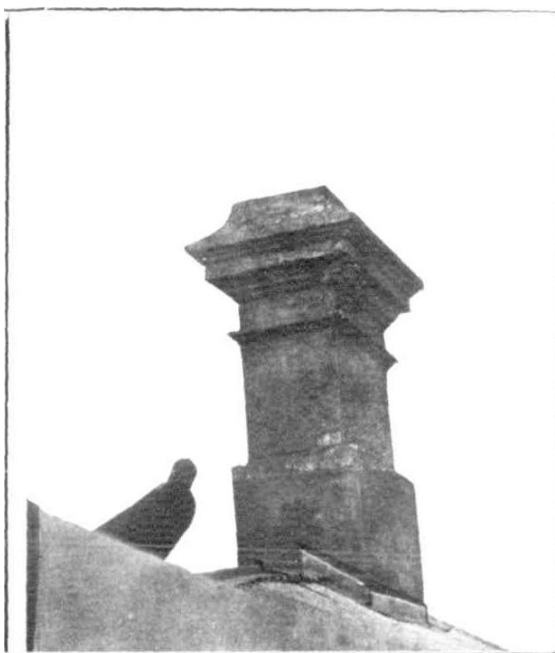
Observer (Adelaide, SA : 1905 - 1931), Saturday 9 June 1917, page 23

BIG FIRE IN THE CITY AND LOUD EXPLOSIONS

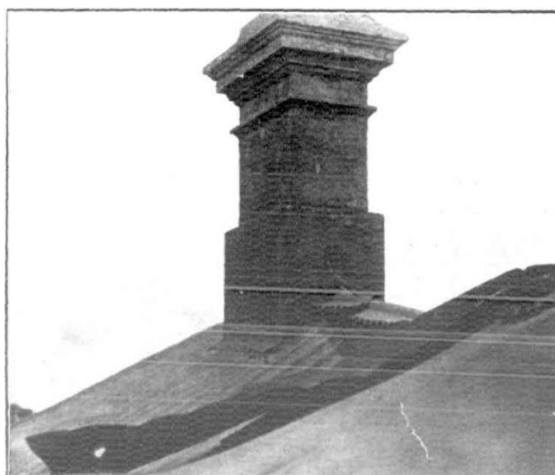
The largest fire that has occurred in Adelaide for a long time broke out in Wakefield street on May 30 at midnight in the premises used as bond and free stores by Messrs. Gambling & McDonald, carriers, Wakefield street. The buildings, which occupy a large area of ground, consist in the main of galvanized iron, and the blaze soon assumed such proportions that several large sheds were involved, and the fire burned with the fury of a furnace over an extent of half a acre. Soon there occurred a tremendous explosion, which flung sheets of galvanized iron for 50 yards into the middle of Wakefield street. This was followed at intervals by four other explosions, the noise of which was heard in the far suburbs.



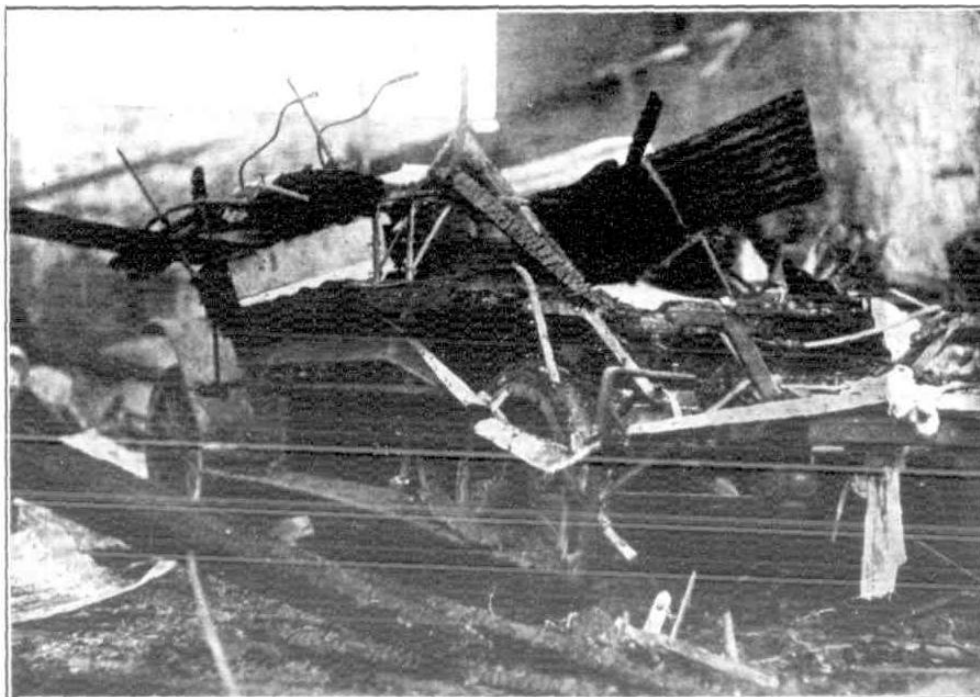
The wreckage after the fire.



Flattened part of the same cylinder, which smashed in the central portion of the roof.



Cylinder which had contained ammonia, and which exploded. and was driven for about 150 yards over a street and several houses, and landed on the roof of a dwelling.



One of the seven motors destroyed in the fire.

Mail (Adelaide, SA : 1912 - 1954), Saturday 16 June 1917, page 7

FIRE AT NORTH ADELAIDE.

SLIGHT DAMAGE TO MILITARY HOSPITAL.

The North Adelaide Fire Brigade Station received a call to-day at 12.30 to a fire which broke out at the 6th Military General Hospital, which was formerly know as Angas College. The building is on the corner of Ward and Jeffcott streets, North Adelaide. The cause of fire outbreak is unknown. The damage was confined to the casing ceiling of the clock tower. The North Adelaide Fire Brigade, with the assistance of one appliance from the Central Station, quickly subdued the flames. There were no patients in the hospital at the time of the outbreak.

Journal (Adelaide, SA : 1912 - 1923), Thursday 2 August 1917, page 1

RAILWAY STATION FIRE.

In connection with the fire which occurred on a train at the Glenelg Railway Station, North terrace, on Wednesday night, it was reported to the City Watchhouse by F.C. Williams that Porter Sullivan was slightly burned while endeavouring to extinguish the flames. His injuries were dressed at the railway station.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Wednesday 10 October 1917, page 5

AN ALARM OF FIRE.

Early on Tuesday evening the Fire Brigade was called to the Wondergraph Cafe, conducted by Mr. A. J. Rowe, in Hindley-street, but found that a small fire that had broken out in a fire-place had been extinguished. No damage was done.

Daily Herald (Adelaide, SA : 1910 - 1924), Wednesday 10 October 1917, page 2

FIRE BRIGADE BUSY

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade at 6.55 p.m. yesterday received a call by tele-phone to Arthur J. Rowe's Wonder-graph Cafe in Hindley street. The brigade turned out in full force, but on arrival found that it was a chimney afire, and the only damage was a window frame charred.

At 9.24 p.m. the brigade was called by a stranger to G. & R. Wills and Co's. Pirie street, but it was a false alarm. The man had seen the reflection of a street lamp in the window.

The Norwood Brigade last evening was called from the Acacias, Kensington, but the alarm was false.