

Adelaide Fire Brigade 1933

Sands and McDougall Directory of South Australia for 1933



Sands and McDougall Directory 1933

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Tuesday 3 January 1933, page 6

CLOTHING WORKROOM DAMAGED

Fire In Central Market

The workroom of Mr. G. Healy, clothing manufacturer, of Central Market buildings west, was damaged by fire yesterday afternoon.

Sergeant Barlow observed smoke issuing from the windows of the workroom, which is on the first floor of the building, and summoned the fire brigade. A reel in charge of Station Officer Giles made a good save. They prevented the blaze, which was then gaining a strong hold, from spreading to other parts of the large block of buildings. Most of the contents of the workroom was damaged by fire or water. A quantity of men's clothing was damaged beyond repair, and rolls of material were burnt on the outside. An ironing table was practically destroyed, and the floor was swamped.

Grass Fire At Edwardstown

Fire swept 15 acres of grass land at the foot of Shepherd's Hill, near the Lady Macdonnell Hotel, Edwardstown, yesterday morning. Residents of the district mustered, and, after a short space of fighting with bags and boughs, extinguished the blaze.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Thursday 5 January 1933, page 10

FEWER CALLS TO FIRES

Fire brigades in South Australia had a quiet year in 1932, the total number of calls received being 587. The previous year a record number (721) was received. Chief Officer Dickie said yesterday that the year had been quiet for the metropolitan brigade, and from their point of view, without any big fires. It was suggested that the reason for the drop in the number of calls might be ascribed to the taking of more precautions against fires.

News (Adelaide, SA : 1923 - 1954), Wednesday 1 February 1933, page 7

ONE IN FIVE FIRE CALLS ARE FALSE

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade attended 587 calls last year, but 117 of them were what are described as "malicious false alarms." Persons who break alarms and summon the brigade without cause are liable to a penalty of a £5 fine or imprisonment for up to seven days. For the second offence imprisonment must be ordered. The maximum term for a second offence is six months in gaol.

Offenders are difficult to catch, but there is a surprising number caught. The Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigade had 1,965 false alarms last year. Besides the cost of these turn-outs to false alarms, there is the danger to the general public of fire engines being driven at speed through the streets. While the firemen are out investigating a false alarm a serious fire might break out elsewhere, and the officers might be seriously hampered in their work by temporary lack of men.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Tuesday 7 February 1933, page 10

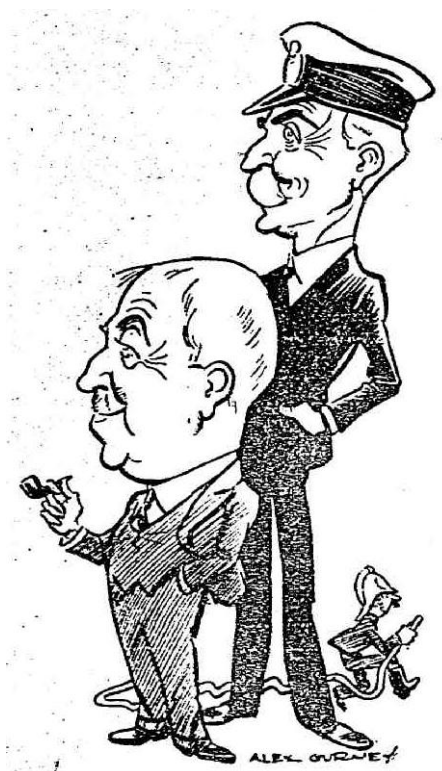
Fire In City Machine Shop

An outbreak of fire in the machine shop of A. G. Healing, Ltd., Hanson street, city, at 10.45 p.m. yesterday was extinguished in a few minutes by a squad from the Metropolitan Fire Brigade. The fire is believed to have been started from the apparatus for heating solder.

News (Adelaide, SA : 1923 - 1954), Tuesday 28 February 1933, page 5

In My Sketchbook

BY ALEX GURNEY



Mr. J. E. Dickie (left) and Mr. G. P. Cooper

From second mate on a sailing vessel to chief of the South Australian Fire Brigade with headquarters at Adelaide has been the rise of Chief Officer J. E. Dickie. Sixty-nine years of age, he has crammed many exciting experiences into his life. For 12 months he was with the London Fire Brigade. He had his share of thrills there, but South Australia, he says, has provided some spectacular and dangerous outbreaks since he joined up here in 1885. In his

younger days Mr. Dickie took part in many sports, but nowadays he confines his activities to the turf. He rarely misses a metropolitan race meeting.

His assistant, Deputy Chief Officer G. P. Cooper, holds the Victoria Cross of the Civil Service—the King's Medal. He won it when he and five fellow-officers at Port Adelaide fought and subdued a fire on the steamer South Africa in the Port River on August 21, 1910. There were 60 tons of dynamite on board. It is said that fearing an explosion the police stopped church services which were being held at the seaport churches. Mr. Cooper, who was born in Melbourne, has spent 38 of his 59 years in the South Australian brigade.

News (Adelaide, SA : 1923 - 1954), Tuesday 28 February 1933, page 1

£4,000 Damage at Keswick

FIRE DESTROYS BEST RECORDS

The fire, which broke out in the sergeants' mess at Keswick Barracks at midnight yesterday, spread with lightning like rapidity to the Repatriation Department store, office, and massage department. Damage estimated at £4,000 was done. The most serious loss was the destruction of practically all the hospital records, giving details of patients treated since the hospital opened. Abridged reports are kept at the Adelaide office, but more than 4,000 X-ray photographs and similar valuable data were destroyed.

A military departmental enquiry into the cause of the outbreak was held this morning. The proceedings were not made public. The equipment in the massage department was probably worth £600 to £800. Some of it had been given by patriotic bodies soon after the war ended, and the remainder has been added from time to time. The building that housed the massage department was also the gift of a patriotic body.

As far as is known, the sergeants' mess was closed at 6 o'clock last night, and was not used again. When the fire was discovered the military staff endeavored to check the flames pending the arrival of the brigade. Deputy Chief Cooper, who was in charge of the brigade men, said today that even had the pressure been better they could not have saved the buildings already alight. We might have got the fire under control earlier, but we could not have saved more than we did," he said. Mr. Cooper said that poor water pressure was a matter with which the brigade had frequently to contend. The mains were not big enough for the present day needs. Apparently the money was not available to enlarge them, he said.

Apart from the sergeants' mess, all of the buildings and plant belonged to the Repatriation Department. The Deputy Commissioner (Mr. J. W. Bell) inspected the damage early today, but declined to give any particulars of plans to replace the buildings and necessary equipment. The Federal Government carries its own fire risk. It is contended that even though occasionally a fire such as this occurs, the policy pays in the long run. Constable Holymes, of Goodwood, is preparing a report for the coroner. (Other References on Page 5)

News (Adelaide, SA : 1923 - 1954), Tuesday 28 February 1933, page 5

WAR HEROES WERE CALM UNDER FIRE

But They Give All Praise to the Nurses

ROLLICKING KESWICK STORIES

Rollicking stories of last night's fire are going the round in D Ward at Keswick Hospital today. Beds are back in the ward and on the verandah. Those patients who are up were busy putting their belongings in order. They refused to be called heroes. Their part—and the sisters say it was a game one—they refuse to discuss. But they are ready and willing to talk about the nurses!

"It was like being back in the trenches—the excitement," said one hardened war veteran. All we missed was the rum issue. When the carbon di-oxide cylinder burst in the burning buildings we had the old instinct to duck for cover, and old-time war jokes were retold by the score." "Think of all the beer that was blowing up in the sergeants' mess, and not a hero among us game enough to rescue it," said another with a grin. "Sister Roach, our night nurse, was a wonder," said one man. "There was not a trace of panic. She just woke us up and said, 'Sorry to disturb you, boys, but there is a fire, and there might be some danger, so we had better move your beds.'" "I thought it was a grass fire she was talking about." broke in another, "so I said, 'Let it burn,' but when I woke up properly I saw the flames, and I thought I was back at the war." "But Sister Roach was a marvel," went on the first speaker. "She worked like a Trojan, and so they all did. "Every now and again she would make the rounds, saying 'Are my boys all right?' If any of us strayed off to have a look at the fire she was after us like a whirlwind."

"Was it a sight?" said another patient. "There must have been nearly a thousand people on the spot at one time. Girls in beach pyjamas, men in bathing suits and shorts working side by side with a man in full evening dress." "That man in evening dress did as much work here as anybody." another man said. "I couldn't help noticing him. His white shirt was black before he was here very long, but he never let up for a second." The heat was terrific, according to the patients in D ward. The iron of their walls was at white heat. Sparks and charred papers blew from the burning storehouse right over the roof of D ward to the lawn in front. Everybody was out of D ward and the place dismantled of wireless sets and lights in about 15 minutes, the men say. One of the patients is undergoing a great amount of teasing because to save some of the vases in the ward he threw them out of the window and they crashed into splinters on the hard pavement. "Still they were not burned," say his companions brutally.

Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1895 - 1954), Thursday 2 March 1933, page 14

FIRE AT KESWICK HOSPITAL

WOODEN BUILDINGS DESTROYED PATIENTS SAFE

A spectacular fire which broke out just before midnight on Monday blazed among the wood and iron buildings at Keswick military barracks and hospital and caused thousands of pounds worth of damage before firemen, wrestling with limp hoses due to a poor water supply, managed to subdue it.

The fire began in the sergeants' mess in the south-eastern corner of the grounds, and, driven by the south-westerly wind, swept through this structure, which runs parallel with the main brick hospital block. In rapid succession the mess, the store, office, and the massage department of the hospital were consumed, by the fire, but the main brick building was saved. The administrative block of the barracks was not threatened. Strenuous fighting by 40 firemen from metropolitan brigades stopped the fire at the massage department, a valuable adjunct of the hospital. There were grave fears for some time that S ward, from which the T.B. soldier inmates had already been removed, would be lost, along with the recreation hall, but these were saved. Nurses in pyjamas, patients, permanent soldiers with uniforms half thrown on, rushed to remove furniture and fittings, but the block, although only a few yards away from the blazing massage department, was saved. Flames rose 70 to 80 feet into the air, and the heat beat fiercely on the hospital, in which all lights had been extinguished when the fire snapped the wires. The State Commandant (Brig. Hardie), who was among the fire fighters, said that there was no insurance on any of the destroyed buildings.

Nurses Discover Fire

Three nurses from Sister Rowe's private hospital — Sisters Sims and Male and Nurse Billing— saw the fire when motoring home from Glenelg. They saw a reddish glow when passing the Keswick Hospital. They thought it was a train at first, but, realising that some of the hospital buildings were on fire, they rushed in and assisted the Keswick nurses to remove

the T.B. patients to safety. These patients are now in the main building. There were 50 patients all told in the hospital, including 12 in the T.B. wing.

Woman Uses Garden Hose

Mrs. Bassett wife of the resident medical superintendent (Dr. R. C. Basset), was alarmed by the smell of fire half an hour before the flames burst out. She went outside and heard a crackling noise, but thought at first that it was caused by men on Anzac Highway. Then a little later, she noticed a glare and, rushing outside, found that the sergeants' mess was on fire and that the store had just caught alight. With commendable courage she got the garden hose and played it on to the burning building, but the small stream of water had no effect on the flames. She and Dr. Bassett then removed two motor cars to safety.

Patients Asleep

Of the 12 T.B. patients Mr. E. Brennan was too ill to leave his bed, which was wheeled out of the ward to a place of safety. Mr. Frank Crocker also had to be assisted out. The other T.B. patients were Messrs. J. Longstaff, E. McMillan, J. Kavanagh, F. Hounslow, J. McCloskey, R. Mason, L. J. Hourigan, A. Villiers, E. W. Moeller, and J. Tucker. They were separated from the fire by only the office building, and were all asleep when it started. They were in D ward, which was a single storeyed structure on the western side of the block which was burnt. This block comprised the sergeants' mess, the store containing bedding and linen and other inflammable material, the office and the massage department.'

Records Lost

It is feared that many of the valuable records of the history of cases treated at the hospital have been lost, although Dr. Sargent, who has been transferred to Kalgoorlie, and was spending his last night at the hospital, dashed into the store and saved some of them. The very expensive massage plant was destroyed, and all of the valuable hospital stores, including linen and bedding, were burnt. There were two billiard rooms in the sergeants' mess, where the fire started, and these were destroyed. The hospital will be able to carry on as usual. It will, of course be greatly inconvenienced. The matron said that a serious loss was the burning of the store-room, containing hospital linen, crockery, and other supplies. Naturally there, will be dis-organisation this morning, but the matron hopes that this will soon be cleared away. She hopes to be able to put the 12 T.B. patients back in D ward this morning.

'Old Soldiers'

A comment by Mr. Brennan, one of the 12 men taken from D Ward, 'We are old soldiers,' was typical of the attitude of the nursing staff and the patients towards the fire. There was an entire lack of any suggestion of panic or even nervousness to cause confusion. The whole of the staff was in bed except a few nurses who were doing night duty. The nurses rapidly dressed and assisted in the work of saving the patients. When the lights failed the confusion was increased until nurses were able to equip themselves with hurricane lamps. Of the patients in the main building many were well enough to get up and walk outside. The others, some of them considerably alarmed, remained in bed while nurses stood beside them in case of danger spreading to their vicinity. Three fire reels, under Deputy Chief Cooper and Station Officers Sayers and Giles, together with about 20 men, were sent from the city. They found that the pressure in the water mains in the hospital grounds and outside was poor. They applied pumps in the grounds and in Hampton road nearby, and this stiffened the stream being directed on the burning buildings.



State Library of South Australia - Keswick Hospital : From the Parade Ground [B 26285/13], Keswick Hospital in 1917. 'Note the progress'. Approximately 1918. Part of Album Collection.

Mail (Adelaide, SA : 1912 - 1954), Saturday 4 March 1933, page 1

FIRE IN HINDLEY STREET SHOP

The prompt arrival of the fire brigade prevented the spread of a fire which destroyed portion of the stock in the rear of a two-story brick shop and dwelling at the corner of Hindley and Grey streets, Adelaide, tonight.

Noticing smoke issuing from a ventilator in the wall of the building, which is used by Mr. A. Della Valle, an Italian, as a grocery and general store, Mr. A. Smedley gave the alarm. At the time of the outbreak Mr. Della Valle and two of his countrymen, who board with him, were all absent from the premises. The police are endeavoring to communicate with him.

Sweets and packages of groceries stored in the rear of the shop were damaged by fire and water, but until the contents are checked by Mr. Della Valle he cannot estimate the damage. Firemen under Station Officer Sayers underwent risks in fighting the blaze, which was well under control 20 minutes after their arrival at the shop. While they were removing cans of methylated spirits and kerosene from the shop one of the cans exploded. A fireman, who was retreating hastily around a corner, fell into a cellar in the darkness but escaped without injury.

News (Adelaide, SA : 1923 - 1954), Thursday 2 March 1933, page 7

Fire Figures Show 117 Alarms Last Year Were Malicious

There were 107 fires, 17 chimney fires, and 103 rubbish and grass fires in the metropolitan area during 1932. None occurred at Moonta, Tanunda, and Mallala. These figures are contained in the report of the South Australian Fire Brigades' Board. There were 166 false alarms in the city and 46 in other districts. Of these 117 were "malicious," 33 were "justified alarms," and 62 were due to "line faults." Malicious false alarms decreased by 43 on the 1931 figures. The total of calls to the brigades was 587—a decrease of 134. Not one of 1932's fires was classed as "serious." This, says the report, is probably because the firearm received early notification of the outbreaks. The amount of insurance on property which was actually

affected by fire was £295,477. Sparks from other fires caused 29 outbreaks, and "overheating" was responsible for 27.

News (Adelaide, SA : 1923 - 1954), Wednesday 8 March 1933, page 6

NO CUT IN PAY OF THEATRE FIREMEN

The Fire Brigades' Board has refused a request by the Motion Pictures Exhibitors' Association to reduce the rate payable for the attendance of firemen at the theatres. The Entertainment Act provides for the attendance of an auxiliary fireman where accommodation exceeds 700, for which 8/ a man must be paid—6/6 to the fireman and 1/6 to the board. The association said that permanent firemen in theatres, and theatre and council employes, had had a reduction equivalent to 20 per cent.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Monday 3 April 1933, page 10

Small Fire Near City Paint Store

A fire among a quantity of packing cases stacked in the yard of the paint and glass store of Clarkson, Ltd., in Hindmarsh square was promptly put out, shortly after 5 p.m. yesterday by a Metropolitan Fire Brigade squad under the direction of Station-Officer Griffin. The only damage done to the buildings was the scorching of one side of a wood and iron shed.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Saturday 29 April 1933, page 15

MAN AND DAUGHTER RECEIVE BURNS

Fire In Hutt St. Shop

The contents of a ham and beef shop owned by Mr. H. Backman, in Hutt street, were destroyed by fire about 7.15 p.m. yesterday. Miss Delia Backman, 15, was severely burnt. She is in the Adelaide Hospital, and her father was treated for burns on the hands and forearms. Mr. Backman was carrying a tin of petrol through the shop when the flame of a gas jet caused the vapor to ignite and explode. His daughter, who was standing near, was sprayed by the burning liquid. The burning petrol set alight the contents of the shop. The Adelaide Fire Brigade was called. Owing to an ammonia cylinder in a refrigerating plant bursting, the firemen had to don gas masks. Nearly £100 damage is estimated to have been done.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Monday 1 May 1933, page 10

Motor Car Damaged By Fire

While Mr. M. F. Bagshaw, of Chain of Ponds, was attending a meeting at the City Mission, Maughan Church, yesterday morning, his motor car, which he had parked in Pitt street, took fire. The Fire Brigade extinguished the flames, but not before extensive damage had been done.

Labor Daily (Sydney, NSW : 1924 - 1938), Friday 9 June 1933, page 7

FATALLY HURT IN FIRE-ENGINE CRASH

ADELAIDE, Thursday.

Senior Fireman Clarence Wells, 50, of the North Adelaide Fire Brigade, collapsed while driving a fire cart in the city to-day, causing the vehicle to crash on to the footpath and hurl him head first on to the road-way. He was badly injured, and died while being taken to hospital.

Telegraph (Brisbane, Qld. : 1872 - 1947), Friday 9 June 1933, page 5

COLLAPSE AT WHEEL

Death of Fire Engine Driver

ADELAIDE, June 9.

Clarence William Wells, 50, senior fireman, died yesterday as a result of injuries caused when the fire hose engine which he was driving, swerving into a veranda post in O'Connell Street, North Adelaide. It is thought that Wells collapsed while at the wheel, thus losing control of the vehicle.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Friday 9 June 1933, page 21

FIREMAN'S DEATH

Seizure While Driving Brigade's Motor

Senior Fireman Clarence William Wells, 50, of George street, North Adelaide, met his death in extraordinary circumstances yesterday. He was driving the North Adelaide Fire Station's motor hose carriage in O'Connell street, and apparently had a seizure while at the wheel. Intending to drive the vehicle to the pit at the rear of the station. Wells travelled along Tynte street into O'Connell street. He was seen driving on the correct side of O'Connell street at 10 miles an hour. Fifty yards from the intersection of Tynte and O'Connell streets, Wells dropped his head and right arm, and the vehicle swerved across O'Connell street at an angle of 45 degrees. It narrowly missed a group of council employes repairing the road, and the front wheels and the near side rear wheel mounted a 9-in. kerb on the east side of the road Wells was thrown to the left of the vehicle, and his head struck a heavy verandah post. He was taken to the Adelaide Hospital, but was dead on arrival. Wells joined the fire brigade in August, 1910. He leaves a widow and three children. Plainclothes Constable McKay is preparing a report for the coroner.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Wednesday 14 June 1933, page 16

Small Fire In City Warehouse

A small fire occurred in the hardware department at the Currie street store of Colton, Palmer & Preston, Ltd., last night. The alarm was given by automatic sprinklers in the building, and two fire brigade reels were quickly on the scene. With the help of the sprinklers the firemen had no difficulty in extinguishing the blaze. The cause of the fire is unknown. A small amount of damage was caused by the fire and by water.

News (Adelaide, SA : 1923 - 1954), Wednesday 21 June 1933, page 5

COLLAPSE OF FIREMAN

'Death Due to Natural Causes'

STORY OF SMASH

A corporation employe told the Acting Coroner (Mr. H. M. Muirhead, S.M.) today that on the morning of June 8, in O'Connell street, North Adelaide, he had seen a fireman apparently faint at the wheel of a motor car, which then turned sharply, and ran over the gutter on the other side of the street. The fireman was thrown from the motor car, and died shortly afterward. Mr. Muirhead was conducting an inquest into the death of Clarence William Wells, 50, senior fireman, formerly of George street, North Adelaide. He found that Wells had died from natural causes. The inquest, he said, had been held because of the unusual circumstances of the death of Wells, but the postmortem examination had removed any doubt of the cause of death.

HEAD STRUCK POST

Witnesses told the Coroner that Wells had been stationed at the North Adelaide fire station in Tynte street. About 9.20 a.m. on June 8 he left the Tynte street entrance of the station, driving

a motor hose carrier. He intended to take the motor to a pit at the rear of the station in George street. Rudolph Christian Kowalick, corporation employe, of Barton terrace, North Adelaide, said that he was working in O'Connell street. He saw Wells turn from Tynte street into O'Connell street and drive north. After the motor had gone a few yards he saw Wells' head drop, and thought that he might have got giddy or fainted. The motor car Wells was driving turned sharply to the right and continued across the road until it hit the kerb and a verandah post. Wells' head struck a post, and he was thrown on to the footpath. He died a few minutes later. Dr. Charles Trevor Turner, of Unley Park, said that a postmortem examination revealed trivial abrasions to the left cheek, eye, and temple. He had found a cerebral haemorrhage, and thought that death had been caused by it.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Thursday 22 June 1933, page 12

FIREMAN WHO DIED AT THE WHEEL

"Natural Causes," Coroner Finds

Medical evidence was given yesterday at the inquest into the death of Clarence William Wells, senior fireman, of George street. North Adelaide, who collapsed and died while driving a North Adelaide Fire Brigade appliance along O'Connell street, North Adelaide on June 8. This showed that cerebral haemorrhage, which it was believed had caused Well's death, was spontaneous and not due to any injury. Wells was driving along O'Connell street when the motor was seen suddenly to swerve across the road and strike the kerb. Thomas Brayshaw, dealer, O'Connell street, told the acting Coroner (Mr. H. M. Muirhead, S.M) that, as the machine came across the road. Wells seemed to be reaching with his hand to switch off the engine. After that the machine struck the kirb. Wells hit his head against verandah post, and was thrown out of the machine. Dr. Charles Trevor Turner, of Unley road. Unley Park, said that a post mortem examination on Wells's body revealed superficial abrasions over the left cheek, left eyebrow and left temple. The skull was not fractured. Death in his opinion, was due to cerebral ventricular haemorrhage. He had seen similar haemorrhages in people who had suffered no injury whatsoever. Excitement, Dr. Turner told the court, was one of the causes of this type of haemorrhage. Mr. Muirhead said that the result of the postmortem examination had removed all doubt as to the cause of Wells's death. He found that he had died from natural causes—that was cerebral haemorrhage.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Friday 4 August 1933, page 21

Small Fire In City Premises

The prompt summoning of the Fire Brigade by Constable Read enabled firemen to extinguish in its early stages a fire in the wholesale furniture upholstery premises of Mr. A. J. Higgins, Blyth street, city, soon after 11 p.m. yesterday. The damage was confined to the flooring of the two-storey stone building. It is believed that the fire originated among sweepings on the floor of the premises.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Monday 7 August 1933, page 9

£8,000 FIRE AT FLOUR MILLS

Midnight Blaze At Mile End

30 THROWN IDLE

Damage estimated at from £8,000 to £10,000 was caused by a fire which broke out at the flour mills of William Charlick, Ltd., at Mile-End at about 11.30 p.m. on Saturday. The fire was confined to the wheat cleaning section of the plant, which is separated from the main flour milling section, which is valued at about £50,000, by a 12 in. brick partition and fire-proof doors. Firemen fought for nearly two hours before they got the fire under control, but at 1.30 a.m. it broke out again. By 2 a.m., however, it had been extinguished.

The general manager of the company (Mr. C. S. Charlick) said last night that the flour mill would have to be closed down for several months while the wheat cleaning machinery was being repaired. This would throw about thirty men out of work temporarily, but some men would still be employed in the store, which was not damaged. As there were about 2,000 tons of flour, bran and pollard in stock, the sales department of the mill would be open as usual for business today.

Five Floors Damaged

All five floors of the plant were damaged. The greatest damage, how-ever, occurred on the top and first floors. An area about 20 feet square of the roofing was destroyed. Fire Brigade officers said that the fire might have begun on the ground floor, the flames being drawn upwards through the elevators. There was also a possibility that the top floor might have caught fire first, and some burning material dropped down the elevators. A little damage was done to the ground floor, but the flames practically missed the second and third floors before spreading to the fourth floor. The alarm was given by an employe at the Mile-End railway yards, who saw flames breaking through the roof. Two pumps from the Adelaide and Thebarton Fire Brigades were rushed to the mill, but the blaze had a firm hold. Firemen hacked away portion of the iron roof, and played their hoses directly on to the fire. There was a danger of the fire spreading to the oil depots of the Shell Co. and the Vacuum Oil Co., which are only a short distance from the mill. The firemen, however, succeeded in confining the fire to the plants. None of the stock was damaged. The S.A. Farmers' Co-operative Union has premises adjoining the mill, but they were not damaged. Several trucks loaded with wheat were standing on rails at the rear of the mill. An engine was quickly brought into commission, and the trucks were taken out of the danger zone. Mr. Charlick believes that the necessary new machinery parts can be obtained in Australia. He expects that carpenters and millwrights will be at work within a week repairing the plant. The damaged plant is insured with the Insurance Office of Australia, Ltd.

Mail (Adelaide, SA : 1912 - 1954), Saturday 12 August 1933, page 2

FIRES THAT HAVE THRILLED ADELAIDE

FIRE has often been described as man's greatest friend and his greatest enemy. Adelaide has seen comparatively little of its dangerous side of late, but the recent outbreak at the flour mills of William Charlick, Ltd., Mile-End, calls to mind times when its powers of destruction have been terrible. Probably the most spectacular, and at the same time the most tragic, fire ever experienced in South Australia was that which broke out on the 7,000-ton City of Singapore at Port Adelaide on Saturday evening, April 26, 1924. The vessel was carrying large quantities of cased oil, and had almost completed its outward loading when the fire broke out. The firemen tackled an unenviable job magnificently, and just as their chiefs were congratulating themselves on a miraculous "save," there was a big explosion in one of the holds. The explosion was felt right to the foothills, and many people believed that an earthquake had occurred. It cost the lives of three firemen—A. Greenman, G. J. A. Anderson, and J. Hickey—and 10 others were injured. The sides of the ship and the dock were badly buckled. Eventually, however, it was towed to Europe and rebuilt.

WHILE the City of Singapore was the most tragic fire on the South Australian waterfront, that on the South Africa in 1910 was undoubtedly the most thrilling. It was late afternoon on a Sunday in August that the Port Adelaide Fire Brigade received a call to the South Africa, which was lying loaded with explosives at the North Arm. An explosion on board would have shattered Port Adelaide, and probably most of the districts between there and Adelaide. This was the position that faced members of the fire float as they set off to the outbreak. Foreman G. P. Cooper (now Deputy Chief Officer in Adelaide) was in charge. On arrival alongside the South Africa they found that all the crew with the exception of three had fled ; and the remaining trio were attempting to launch a boat to get away. The plates on the side of the steamer were red hot, and it was not possible to board her by the gangway. "You are not going on board, are you? She is doomed and the crew has left." said the second mate as the

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2 May 2026

fire float drew alongside. Foreman Cooper replied that he intended to stay and do his best. He also persuaded two of



THE SIX FIREMEN who received the King's Police Medal for quelling the fire on the steamer South Africa. Back (from left) — W. Mitchell, W. Valentine. Centre — J. P. Murphy, Foreman, G. P. Cooper, W. Cheminant. Front — G. V. Davies.

the crew, including the second mate, to remain with him. Setting to work with three hoses the firemen were successful after a critical fight in preventing the fire reaching the magazine, with its 120 tons of explosives. When it was all over, however, it was found that the bulkhead of the magazine was charred through, and cases of gelignite were blackened with smoke. At Port Adelaide the position was regarded as so serious that the police and municipal authorities visited the churches and advised the congregations to get out of the buildings. Each of the six firemen on the float received the King's Police Medal (the V.C. of their branch of the service), the Distinguished Service Medal of the Fire Brigades Board, and a bronze medallion and gold watch from the people of Port Adelaide. At the presentation of these medals the story was told of one preacher who advised his congregation to leave the church on the night of the fire, but said that as there was no special hurry they "would take up the collection as the congregation left through the door."

THE first really serious outbreak in Adelaide occurred on the premises of James Marshall & Co., now the Myer Emporium (S.A.) Ltd. On Sunday morning, March 12, 1882, flames were seen emerging from the top floor of the building. Eighteen men and women employes of the company were living on the premises, and made a hasty retreat for safety. One, in fact, fell one floor in fright. The volunteer fire brigade of the time did valiant service, but by the time the fire was extinguished the building was only a shell, and £70,000 worth of stock was ruined by fire and water. In 1884 there was a wave of incendiarism in Adelaide, with timber mills as the main sufferers. It culminated in a fire which broke out in the furniture warehouse of Patrick Gay, in Rundle street, and spread to a number of adjoining premises, doing damage of more

than £80,000. Mr. Gay had brought back from Europe on a recent trip many rich and rare works of art, all of which were lost. At that time, apparently, Adelaide had not earned its reputation for culture. "The Register." in its report of the outbreak, states:—"The larrikin element was offensively strong everywhere, and many disturbances were created by half-drunken and wholly intoxicated men and youths, who reeled about the streets and jostled the crowds and insulted females. "Inebriated women of the abandoned class were to be seen reeling through the crowd, and even young lads staggered about under the influence of intoxicants."

THE building with the most unfortunate record was undoubtedly the Academy of Music, a theatre in Rundle street in the early days. It was burned down on January 7, 1884, the whole of the interior fittings being destroyed. The damage ran to £10,000. Just a year later, on January 3, 1885, there was a similar occurrence. It had only been reopened in August, with a seating capacity of 1,000, and all the latest innovations of the theatre included in the plan. Everything was again destroyed, and the Melbourne Dramatic Company, which was playing melodrama there, lost the whole of its wardrobe. Things went well until Christmas Eve, 1886, when the Academy and three large shops were again gutted, the loss reaching £60,000. Adelaide was filled with a pleasure seeking throng, which surged round the scene of the fire.



THE CITY OF SINGAPORE burning at the dock at Port Adelaide.

Two firemen — A. Clark and J. Gardner — were inside the building when the roof and portion of a wall fell on them, and they perished in the raging inferno. These three fires in a short period discouraged the owner of the Academy, and he did not rebuild. Burford & Sons, Ltd., had two big fires, after the second of which they transferred their main activity to Dry Creek. The first occurred nine days before Christmas, 1885, when the company premises were situated in Grenfell street. Beginning in a timber yard next door, it spread quickly to Burford's factory, and did £20,000 worth of damage before being controlled. The second outbreak was on a Sunday evening in February, 1919. Just as darkness came a red haze spread across the sky, and thousands of people found their way to Sturt street, where the whole factory was ablaze. The fats in the store fed the



AN ILLUSTRATION of the antiquated appliances possessed by the Metropolitan Fire Brigade at the time of John Martin's fire.

fire, and added to the spectacular effect.

PROBABLY the first real effort at modern window dressing in Adelaide was indirectly responsible for a fire that did damage estimated at £80,000. This occurred in April, 1901, and the victims were John Martin and Co., Ltd. As a special Easter attraction the company had obtained the services of an interstate window dresser. He arranged in one of their main windows a tableau "Rock of Ages." comprising a wax figure of a girl clinging to a cross. A special type of gas burner was used to illuminate the tableau. Shortly after 11 a.m. one day some women were gazing at the display when one noticed a light break out from one of the glass protectors over the burners. It licked some flimsy material, and a fire was started. It was not many moments before customers and shop assistants were out of the building and in the street. The fire spread like lightning, and despite all efforts of the firemen, the losses were tremendous. It is estimated that at one stage 10,000 people were packed into Rundle street and North terrace to watch the sight. One of the most unique incidents concerned with Adelaide fires occurred at the Bankside winery of Thomas Hardy & Sons, Ltd. This winery was on the bank of the Torrens, and contained thousands of gallons of maturing wine in large casks. Attending the winery one day in October, 1904, in response to a call, the fire brigade found the winery in the grip of the fire fiend. It found other things. The nearest water connection was half a mile away, the river bed was empty, and the only water supply came from a well with a three quarter inch service pipe. In the meantime the wine tuns were bursting with the heat, and the cellar was acting as a reservoir. The brigade ran a steam engine pipe into the cellar, and in a few moments fine red wine was being forced through two inch jets on to the flames. A little later additional fire fighting equipment arrived, and a hose half a mile long was connected up to the water main. But it was undoubtedly the wine that saved the home-stead from destruction.

HAROLD, Colton & Co., the fore-runners of Colton, Palmer and Preston, Ltd., suffered a disastrous fire in 1907. In two hours a fine warehouse was reduced to a heap of smoking ruins and four broken, blackened walls. The stock included a quantity of ammunition, and two fire men were injured by exploding cartridges. Genders Building, in Grenfell street, suffered severe damage in 1910. It was occupied mainly by agents and warehousemen, and damage reached £15,000. Other serious outbreaks that are better remembered include that at D. and J. Fowler's bulk store in 1911. Situated behind the company's offices, the store threatened danger to the whole block from King William street to Stephens place, but the brigade did magnificent work, and confined the fire to the store. The premises of Duncan & Fraser Ltd., and Duncan's Motors Ltd., went up in smoke in 1923. Every fire-fighting appliance in the metropolitan area was called into service to prevent the spread of the fire, which did damage

to the tune of £200,000, the most costly yet experienced. The fires at Richards Buildings, Flavel & Co., Ltd., the Colonial Sugar Refinery works at Glanville can be numbered among the disastrous ones. It would be foolish to believe that serious outbreaks are not going to occur in the future, but with modern equipment the firemen have a better chance than in the old days. In any case, Adelaide has a fire-fighting force in which it can have the utmost confidence. It compares favorably with any in the world.

Mail (Adelaide, SA : 1912 - 1954), Saturday 26 August 1933, page 2

FIREMAN'S GOOD SAVE IN THEATRE FIRE

During the screening of the film "The Big Cage" at the Empire Theatre, Grote street, this afternoon portion of the film caught fire. The operator, Mr. L. Bellchambers, escaped injury. Two reels of the Adelaide Fire Brigade extinguished the blaze. Although there was a large number of children in the theatre at the time of the outbreak there was no panic, and all were conveyed to safety. The fireman on duty at the theatre did good work in preventing the fire from spreading and confining it to the operating room until the brigade arrived. It was mainly through his efforts that the damage did not assume far greater proportions. Two operating machines were severely damaged and a quantity of film was destroyed.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Monday 28 August 1933, page 9

FIRE IN THEATRE PROJECTION ROOM

Equipment Damaged, Film Destroyed

Four thousand feet of talkie film were destroyed by a fire which broke out in the projection room at the Empire Theatre, Grote street, about 5 p.m. on Saturday. Two projection machines were damaged by fire and water. When the fire broke out a fireman who was on duty at the theatre used a chemical extinguisher with good effect. The Metropolitan Fire Brigade, quickly summoned, sent two motors, and a timely save was completed. There was a crowd of children at the theatre, but there was no panic. Most of the programme had been screened before the fire broke out.

News (Adelaide, SA : 1923 - 1954), Friday 1 September 1933, page 8

CANDLE FOUND UNDER BED

How Man Died In Blazing Room

In a frenzied attempt to escape from a blazing room, Karl Edward Kalleske, aged 50, a one-armed returned soldier, collapsed at the door and was burned to death in his bedroom on the second floor of a lodging house in Morphett street, Adelaide, early today. Ellen Louth, who occupied a room next to Kalleske, was awakened by the noise of the fire. She left her bed and went on to the balcony, where she discovered that Kalleske's room was on fire. She immediately gave the alarm. Mr. James Adams and Mr. James O'Grady, who were asleep downstairs, rushed to Kalleske's room. They were unable to open the door, and had to break it in. When the clouds of smoke had cleared away they discovered Kalleske lying on the floor against the door. He was taken to the Adelaide Hospital, where he was found to be dead.

Shortly after the removal of Kalleske the Fire Brigade, in charge of Station Officer A. M. Griffin, arrived, and extinguished the fire. The flames were confined to the bed and portion of the floor. Part of a candle was found under the bed. It is thought that Kalleske had been reading in bed and dropped off to sleep. Plainclothes Constable E. J. Davis is preparing a report for the Assistant Coroner (Mr. F. C. Siekmann).

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Friday 15 September 1933, page 25

Cinema Films Burnt

Two feature and several other cinema films were destroyed, and a motor cycle delivery outfit on which they were being carried was considerably damaged when the cycle caught fire at the corner of North terrace and King William street, city, about 4.45 p.m. yesterday. A squad from the Metropolitan Fire Brigade extinguished the fire soon after it had begun. The rider of the motor cycle was Mr. Allen C. Farley, of Cross roads, Kingswood, and the owner was Mr. W. V. Benbow, cinema engineer, of Windsor road, Knoxville. It is believed that the fire was started by a short circuit.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Monday 18 September 1933, page 15

Fire At Government House

Three engines from the Adelaide Fire Brigade were rushed to Government House shortly before 1 o'clock this morning, in response to a summons by Captain Greville Baird, A.D.C. to the Governor (Sir Alexander Hore-Ruthven).

It is believed that an electric radiator in a room in the sleeping quarters fell over. Bedclothes were ignited by the heat, and the flames spread to other fixtures. Firemen were on the scene before the fire had obtained a dangerous hold, and were able to control it with chemical extinguishers before much damage had been done. The damage was confined to the one room, but firemen remained on duty to see that no smouldering fabrics blazed up.

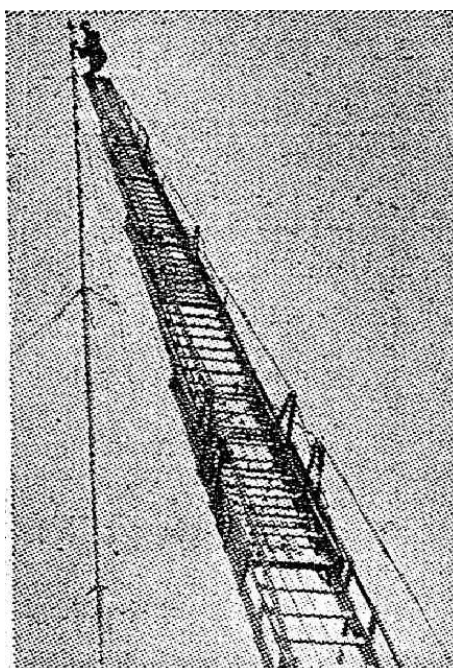
News (Adelaide, SA : 1923 - 1954), Thursday 5 October 1933, page 1

THIRTY OUT OF WORK AS RESULT OF FIRE

Thirty women and girls were thrown out of work today following a fire which broke out last night in rooms occupied by R. H. Landsmeer & Co., mantle specialists, on the first floor of White's Building, at the corner of James place and Rundle street. Damage to the extent of several hundred pounds was done to dresses and the room by water and fire. Eighteen sewing machines, which were in the second room, escaped with only slight tarnish from smoke. Constable Sanderson, who noticed flames shooting from the window on the third floor of the building immediately communicated with the metropolitan fire brigade. The brigade, under Station Officers SAYS and Griffin, had the fire under control within a quarter of an hour.

News (Adelaide, SA : 1923 - 1954), Monday 16 October 1933, page 1

Observatory's Aerial



THE FIRE BRIGADE'S 90-ft. ladder was called into commission at the Observatory today, when a wireless aerial to receive time signals was erected.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Tuesday 17 October 1933, page 18

NEW USE FOR FIRE BRIGADE LADDER

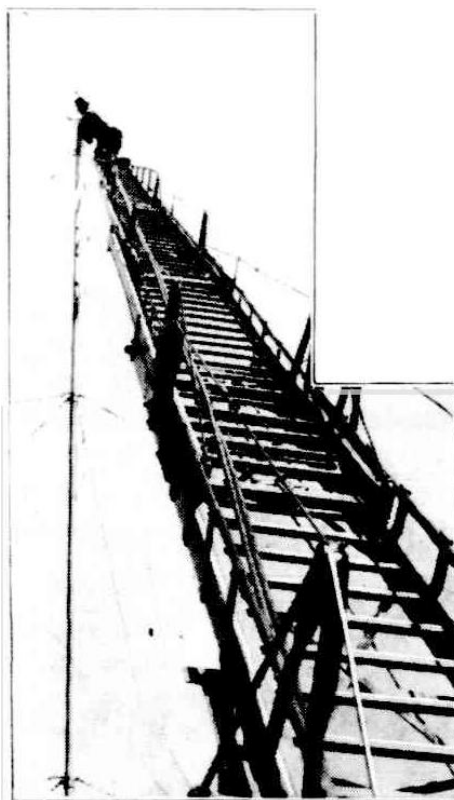
Rope Freed On 75 Ft. Aerial At Observatory

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade showed its versatility yesterday. In recent months it has had many tasks other than the extinguishing of fires. One was the rescue of a cat off a roof. Yesterday it assisted in the restoration of a wireless aerial at the Observatory at West terrace.

In this and the following month international longitudinal tests will be carried out to find if there has been a movement of the surface of the earth since similar tests were taken in 1926. Powerful wireless stations in many parts of the world broadcast time signals at specified hours, and computations based on their reception enable astronomers to ascertain the information they desire. Adelaide is one of the reception stations, and a 75-ft. aerial was erected at the Observatory to carry antennae. In a storm, part of the antennae was disarranged, only half remaining in use. While the Observatory staff was trying to rectify matters, a rope fouled a pulley at the top of the high mast. To avoid having to lower the aerial, the assistance of the Fire Brigade was obtained. Its extension ladder was raised near the mast, and a fireman, mounting to the top, freed the rope. As the lorry on which the ladder is mounted weighs seven tons, and the approach to the aerial was rough, a temporary wooden roadway was laid down by the Architect-in-Chiefs Department.

Yesterday the station received signals from Bordeaux, Saigon, Honolulu, and Malabar, and from a station near Tokio. Time signals are sent out by Rugby, but they are too weak to be received here, and those from Annapolis are jammed by other stations on a similar wave length.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Tuesday 17 October 1933, page 20



MOUNTING the Metropolitan Fire Brigade's 90-ft. ladder, a fireman yesterday was engaged for some time at the top of the Observatory wireless aerial, which had been interfered with in a storm recently.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Friday 20 October 1933, page 26

NEWS IN BRIEF

Stack Of Wood Burned.—A fire which occurred at the rear of Lawson's Bakery, Nottingham terrace, Keswick, about midday yesterday, destroyed several tons of firewood which had been stacked there. It is thought that the blaze was caused by the wind blowing some hot ashes from the furnace on to the wood. The fire brigade prevented the fire from spreading.

Fire At Black Forest.—A spark from a copper nearby is thought to have been the cause of a fire which severely damaged a combined washhouse and sleep-out and contents at the residence of Mrs. Morey, Orchard avenue, Black Forest, yesterday afternoon. The fire brigade soon had the fire under control.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Thursday 26 October 1933, page 16

NEWS IN BRIEF

Small City Fire.—A fire occurred last night among rubbish on the ground floor of L. G. Abbott & Company's mirror and leadlight works, at the corner of Wakefield and Daly streets, Adelaide. A passer-by noted the flames through a window, and called the Fire Brigade.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Tuesday 31 October 1933, page 15

EARLY MORNING FIRE AT TRAM DEPOT

Switchboard Damaged By Short Circuit

The switchboard at the Hackney tramway depot was badly damaged at 12.38 a.m. today by a fire, starting with a short circuit in the cables in a cellar beneath the board. The first intimation the operator, Mr. George Jones, had of anything amiss was the sudden dropping of all the shutters on the board, immediately afterwards he was overwhelmed by dense clouds of black acrid smoke which poured into the room. A detachment of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, under Station Officer Griffen, was obliged to use special smoke helmets, supplied by air pumps, to work among the underground cables. The fire was under control in about a quarter of an hour. It is not expected that the running of the tramway services will be interfered with, but many of the electric clocks on the routes throughout the city and suburbs, which work from the switchboard, will be thrown out of gear until repairs are effected.

News (Adelaide, SA : 1923 - 1954), Thursday 21 December 1933, page 9

NOT BIG CITY FIRE, BUT BURNING TAR

Big clouds of black smoke rising from the south-west corner of the city today led many people to believe that a serious fire had broken out. But it was only a barrel of tar that had boiled over and caught on fire in the yard of a transformer station of the Adelaide Electric Supply Co. in Wilcox street, off Gilbert street. The Adelaide Fire Brigade extinguished the flames without any damage having been done.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Friday 22 December 1933, page 22

Fatalities And Accidents

Fire In Adelaide Arcade

Prompt calling of the Fire Brigade by Mr. John Clifton Nobbs, of the Rex Theatre, when he noticed flames in the store of Miss Nellie Hunt in the Adelaide Arcade, about 6.10 p.m. yesterday, resulted in the outbreak being quickly quelled. Shelves containing women's and

children's clothing were damaged. Miss Hunt said that when she locked the shop at 6.5 p.m. everything appeared in order. The stock was insured.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1931 - 1954), Tuesday 26 December 1933, page 10

APARTMENT HOUSE CATCHES FIRE

Several Rooms Damaged

A fire destroyed last night a wood and iron sleepout and badly damaged two adjoining rooms on the ground floor of a large two-storey stone apartment house conducted by Mr. T. Marks in North terrace, Hackney.

Mr. Frank Stomp, a traveller, who is the son-in-law of Mr. Marks, occupies the damaged section of the house, but he was absent with his wife and two children at a Christmas party when the fire was discovered. Mr. and Mrs. Marks were asleep in their room on the opposite side of the hall when they were awakened by the smell of smoke. Running out in their night attire, they found that the three-roomed sleepout had practically been destroyed, and that the fire had spread along connecting wooden steps to the large window shutters of one of Mr. Stomp's living rooms. By this time two reels from the Metropolitan Fire Brigade, which had been telephoned by a passer-by, had arrived. Under the direction of Station Officer Sayers, they soon extinguished the blaze, confining the damage in the house to Mr. Stomp's living rooms and contents, including a piano, tables, and chairs, as well as clothing. Six canaries, pets of Mr. Stomp's children, were destroyed. About 20 persons live in the house.

News (Adelaide, SA : 1923 - 1954), Tuesday 26 December 1933, page 3

MAN DREADS CHRISTMAS

LOST BELONGINGS IN FIRE

Arson Theory

Mr. Frank Stomp, a commercial traveller, who had all his house-hold effects destroyed in a fire at Hackney last night, is a man who hates Christmas.

On Christmas Eve two years ago his wife nearly succumbed to a serious illness in the Adelaide Hospital. Many years ago his mother died on Christmas Eve—just before Mr. Stomp, who had made a dash across part of Europe to her home in Austria, reached-her side. Now this Christmas he has lost practically everything in a fire at a Hackney boardinghouse, and his wife is prostrated through shock. The police are enquiring into a report that the fire, which began in a sleepout at an apartment house conducted by Mr. T. Marks at North terrace, Hackney, might have been deliberately caused. Three people said that when leaving to attend a Christmas party they saw the figure of a man near the sleepout and saw smoke and flames. At the time, however, they did not take any notice of him, as they thought that he was burning rubbish.

WHAT PEOPLE SAW

Mr. and Mrs. Stomp and two children lived in the extensive sleepout, which was 36 ft. long by 16 ft. wide, and contained three rooms. The sleep-out was alongside a large two-story building, standing well back from North terrace, with a spacious garden in front. At 10 o'clock two brothers, Messrs. Walter Clarence Sander and Harold Norman Sander, from Hampden (near Eudunda), who were staying at Mr. Marks' establishment, left the house with two women friends to go to a Christmas party. The two men and one of the women said today that they saw a man at the sleep-out, but did not think that there was any cause for them to interfere. They could not give any description of him except that they thought he was in a grey suit. When they returned later and found that there had been a fire they immediately recalled the suspicious behaviour of the stranger.

LASTED 10 MINUTES

The fire lasted only 10 minutes, but within that time the sleepout, which was partly overgrown with creepers, was totally destroyed. Mr. Stomp today estimated the value of his household effects at £200. Through the prompt arrival of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade most of the main building was saved, although some rooms were damaged. "With my wife and children I had been out on a Christmas visit to friends," said Mr. Stomp. "We saw the lights and cars in front of the house, and thought there had been an accident. Two love birds, or parrakeets, in a cage hanging on a tree near the sleepout were dead with the heat, and so were the goldfish in the children's fishpond, also six canaries. "I have always been frightened of Christmas time, and this is another occasion when my fear has been justified. I am always pleased when Christmas is over." When Mrs. Stomp was ill in the Adelaide Hospital the Christmas before last, her husband gave blood for a transfusion, which saved her life.