

Adelaide Fire Brigade 1910

The Sands and McDougall Directory for 1910 has the following listings:



Sands and McDougall Directory 1910

Herbert Hedger, 90 Wakefield Street, North side.

Metropolitan Fire Brigade Stations

Metropolitan Fire Brigade Station, Between 87 Wakefield Street, South side, Lieutenant W. G. Rickwood, Superintendent and 117 Wakefield Street which are the Simpsons buildings.

North Adelaide Fire Brigade Station, Tynte Street East, North side, Oldham, C. T. in charge.

Port Adelaide Fire Brigade Station, Commercial Street West side, Hedger, H. H, foreman-in-charge.

Semaphore Fire Brigade Station, Jagoe and Hall Streets, Hopkins, Francis F, frmn-in-charge.

Unley Fire Brigade Station, Edmund Street, North side, Luck, G, frmn in charge.

Glenelg Fire Brigade Station, Augusta Street, Kellett, J. C, foreman-in-charge.

Norwood Fire brigade Station, Parade, South side, Bland, T. W, in charge.

Gawler Fire Brigade Station, Stephens, H. N, frmn Fire Brigade, Lyndoch rd.

Kadina Fire Brigade Station, Graves Street, Booker, W. L, in charge.

Kapunda Fire Brigade Station, Main Street, Goddard, F, frmn fire brigade.

Moonta Fire Brigade Station, Caroline St, Cook, E. W, fire brigade.

Port Augusta Fire Brigade Station, Commercial Road, McDonald, G, frmn Fire Brigade.

Port Pirie Fire Brigade Station, Gertrude st, Napier, Arch, foreman Fire Brigade.

Hindmarsh Volunteer Fire Brigade Stations

Hindmarsh Place, North side, No 1 station, Duncan, Jas, supt ; Longman, Roy, sec

Gibson Street, South side, fire reel No. 2 station

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Thursday 20 January 1910, page 6

FALSE ALARM OF FIRE.

At 9.50 a.m. on Wednesday the Metropolitan Fire Brigade turned out to a call received from the Hindley-street alarm, between King William-street and Morphett-street. They were promptly on the scene, but it was found that the alarm had been caused through the crossing of the wires.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Thursday 27 January 1910, page 4

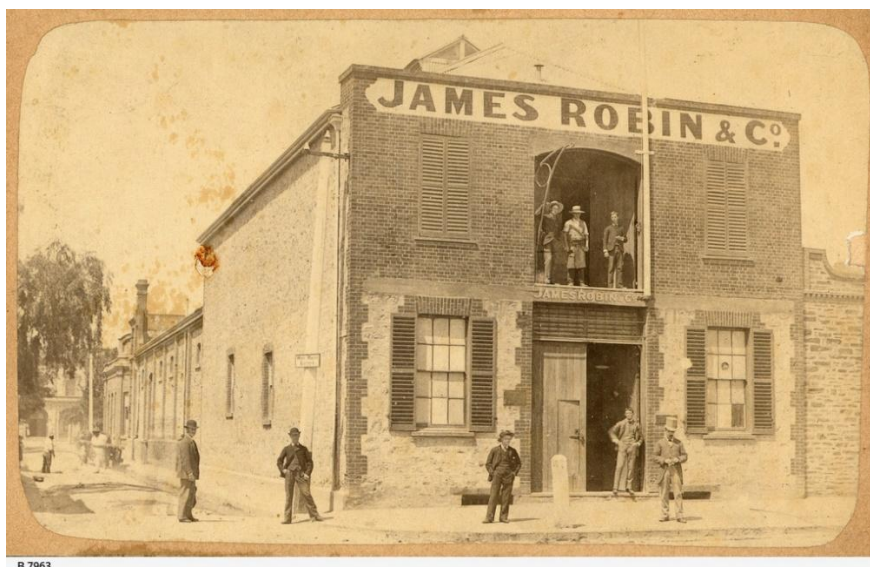
FIRE AT NORWOOD.

Norwood Fire Brigade received a call at 5.20 on Wednesday afternoon to the premises occupied by Mr. W. Basse, at the corner of Beulah road and George street. On arrival it was found that the back portion of the house was alight, and that a washhouse, bathroom and verandah had been destroyed. Slight damage was done to a bedroom. The blaze spread next door to the yards of Mr. E. Hall's aerated water establishment and burned four wood and iron sheds. The water pressure available for extinguishing the fire was exceptionally poor. Both premises were insured. The motor engine was sent from the Metropolitan Fire Station to assist the Norwood reel, but a mishap occurred to it on the way. At the corner of Hutt and Pirie streets a milkcart crossed in front and the driver turned sharply to avoid a collision with it. The swerve caused a tire to come off, and in consequence the motor ran suddenly on to the footpath. It stopped against a wall, but no damage was caused. A telephone message was immediately sent to the head station, and horse appliances were dispatched to the fire.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Monday 7 February 1910, page 6

FALSE ALARM OF FIRE.

There was a little commotion among the people gathered in the vicinity of the G.P.O. on Saturday evening at about 8.30 when the Metropolitan Fire Brigade dashed past on its way along Franklin-street. It was subsequently ascertained that a false alarm had been given, and that it was due to the twisting of two wires.



State Library of South Australia - Grenfell Street [B 7963], Grenfell Street, south side, frontage of building is 11 yards. Left side of the building abuts Chesser Street. The building contains the wholesale import business of James Robin (1817-1894) (pronounced ROE-bin). He arrived in Adelaide in 1851 and had 5 sons and 3 daughters. He suffered a speech impediment which prevented him from public speaking. Together with Nicholas P Le Bair (died in 1854) he established the prominent business in 1851. Fire destroyed the two storey warehouse in 1910. It stood at the corner of Chesser Street and Grenfell Street. Approximately 1870, Part of Acre 145 Collection.

Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1895 - 1954), Saturday 19 February 1910, page 43

FIRE IN GRENFELL-STREET.

OVER £6,000, DAMAGE.

Dense volumes of smoke rolling across the business portion of the city on Saturday afternoon, shortly before 4 o'clock, was an intimation that a fire of some dimensions had broken out, and quickly a large crowd of spectators had gathered on the scene of the outbreak, at the corner of Grenfell and Chesser streets. The two storied premises occupied by Messrs. James Robin & Co., grocery warehousemen, were well alight, and the full strength of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade was concentrated on the burning building, which had a considerable depth to Chesser-street. The superintendent of the fire brigade (Lieutenant Rickwood) said when the brigade arrived entrance was forced into the building from four sides, and particular attention was paid to the division wall which separates Robin & Co.'s premises from those occupied by the Small Arms Company. The latter carried a large stock of explosives and cartridges, but fortunately they were not affected by the heat, and the fire was kept clear of them. "I looked in there," said Mr. Rickwood. "Everything was safe." Efforts were made at the outset to prevent the spread of the fire, as owing to the big hold it had obtained it was soon seen that the building was doomed. The water pressure was all that could be desired. Although the fire was safely under control in about two hours two hoses were kept going practically all night on the smoking debris. The salvage will consist of portion of the basement stock, for immediately the fire below was subdued the motor was set to work pumping out the water so as to minimise the damage as far as possible. Extent of the Damage. "It is hard to say," said Superintendent Rickwood, " what the extent of the damage is, for in the basement there are tinned goods lying in heaps, with their wooden cases burned, and the labels destroyed. The stock in the basement appears more or less destroyed or damaged, the ground floor has practically been burnt out, while the first floor over the front portion of the building has been so eaten into by the fire that you may say it is valueless. In addition, the front portion of the roof has fallen in, and all that is left of it is a few sheets of galvanised iron twisted with the heat." The Insurances. The loss of stock cannot be estimated until valuers have gone through the salvaged goods, but it is understood that the damage is a most covered by the insurance. The building was insured for £1,500 with the Liverpool and Globe Assurance Company, the contents and fittings for £3,750 with the Phoenix Assurance Company, and the contents for £1,000 with the National Fire and Marine Assurance Company of New Zealand, while smaller liabilities were held by one or two other societies. A Sporting Firm. The partners in the business, Messrs. Roland, Strachan, and S. Fiddian, who acquired the business a few months ago, were both absent from the city when the fire occurred. The senior partner, Mr. Strachan, was away on the golf links, while Mr. Fiddian was sailing his yacht, Matangi, in the Kintore Cup contest at the Semaphore. The departmental manager. Mr. A. Whyte, was stroking the Mercantile Rowing Clubs eight-oar crew in the champion eights on the Port Adelaide River, while the chief accountant (Mr. J. J. Mitchel.) was playing cricket at Unley. Other mem-bers of the staff were engaged in various sports.

Carrying on the Business.

The safes apparently are intact, although the office fittings are destroyed, and this will help the firm in carrying on the business. Arrangements have been made to secure temporary quarters from Messrs. T. J. and W. Dyason, of Currie-street, while Mr. Fiddian has obtained offices in the Widows' Fund Building. The firm has bulk stores at Port Adelaide, which will enable it to carry on business as before. The City Coroner (Dr. Ramsay Smith) has deemed it unnecessary to hold an enquiry into the cause of the fire which occurred in the Grenfell-street premises of Messrs. James Robin & Co. on Saturday afternoon.



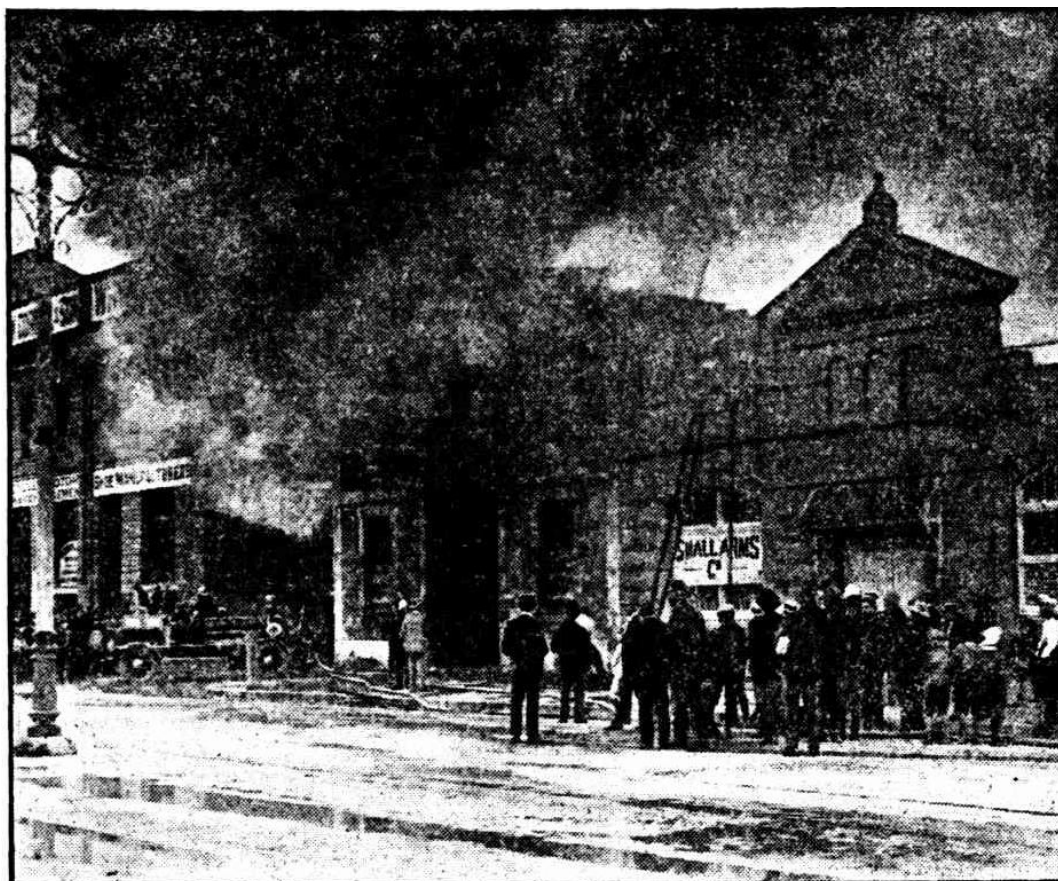
Photos. by H. Krischock. THE MOTOR ENGINE AT WORK.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Monday 14 February 1910, page 7

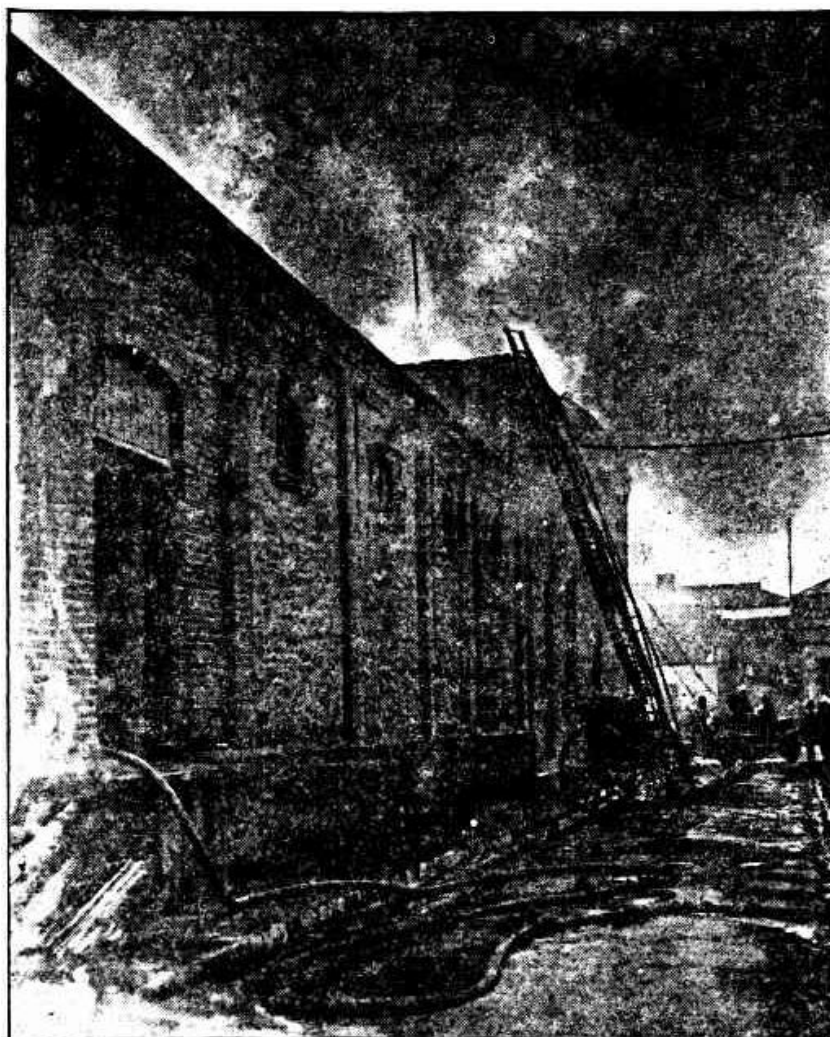
FIRE IN GRENFELL STREET, ROBIN & CO.'S WARE-HOUSE DESTROYED. OVER £6,000
DAMAGE.



THE MOTOR ENGINE AT WORK.



FORCING THE FRONT ENTRANCE — VIEW FROM GRENFELL-STREET.



AFTER THE ROOF HAD FALLEN (SIDE VIEW OF THE BUILDING).

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Tuesday 31 May 1910, page 8

FALSE ALARM OF FIRE.

The Fire Brigade received a call from Hindley-street on Monday morning, and the reels turned out promptly. It was only a false alarm, however, the fall having been received through the crossing of wires.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Saturday 25 June 1910, page 8

UNDER THE BELLS.

JUBILEE OF FIRE BRIGADE. PROCLAIMED PROTECTED. AREA WANTED.

[By our Special Reporter.]

Ready, aye, ready!. That is the fire man's watchword, and Adelaide's fire fighters live up to it. Whenever the clamorous gongs summon their aid the appliances are invariably clear of the station in 30s. The fastest time on record for a turnout is 12s. It seems incredibly smart,



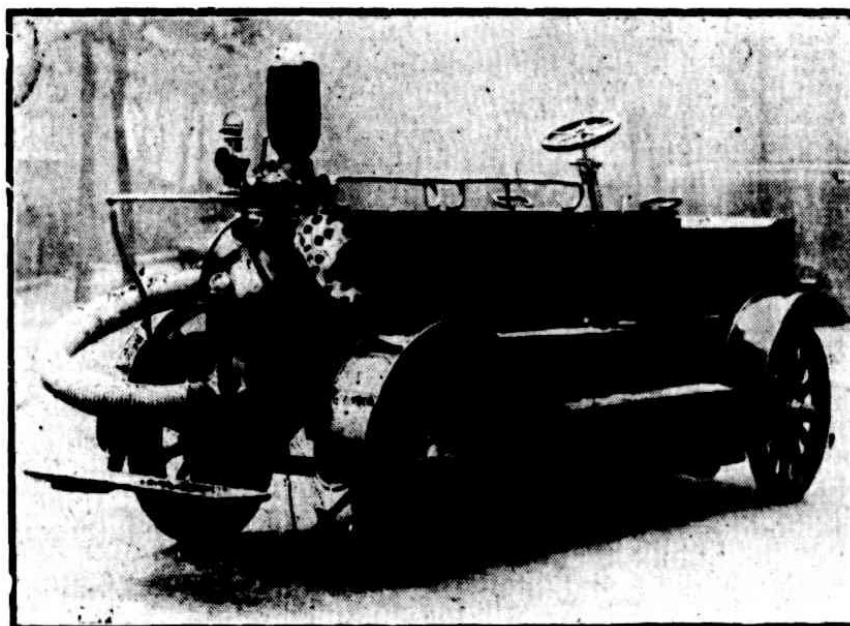
CE. E. FRINSDORF. Chairman of the Fire Brigades Board,

but the secret lies in system and training. Superintendent Rickwood is an ex-naval lieutenant, and his Wakefield street command reflects all the thoroughness and precision of a man-o'-war. —A Nutshell History.— It is just 50 years since the Adelaide Fire Brigade was established. In December, 1859, Mr. Arthur John Baker accepted an offer made by the fire insurance companies through Mr. H. Scott to organize 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



LIEUT. W. G. RICKWOOD. Superintendent of Fire Brigades.

nine brigades were established in country towns. The head station 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. -A Peep at the Plant.— The brigades now consist of 13 stations outside of the metropolis— at North Ade-



ADELAIDE'S FIRST PETROL FIRE ENGINE.

laide, 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. Ponder, M.P., and F. C. Krichauff (nominated by the Government), W. A. Paterson and J. McDowall (insurance companies), Cr. Frinsdorf (Adelaide Corporation), and Mr. J. Sweeney (suburban and country corporations), with Mr. F. W. Bristowe (secretary). To maintain the ideal that the growth of the brigades should be commensurate with the expansion of the centres under their jurisdiction is no easy matter; but every effort is directed to that end, and the service has never failed to rise to every emergency. From the small beginning indicated, the head station is now equipped with a motor fire engine, three steamers, two reels, 11 horses, and 15,000 ft. of hose, besides chemical extinguishers, handpumps, scaling and escape ladders, curricle 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 firefloat 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 as malicious false, alarms; but in 1908 there were 86. Adelaide received 118 calls last year, 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,
Brisbane .. £16,000,000	135,600	41	£6,500
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

—The Handy Men at Work.—

Firemen are for the most part recruited from the ranks of seamen. The training afloat brings out the qualities requisite for the sterner life under the bells. The service demands men who are cheerful, apt, amenable to discipline, handy with ropes, and smart at climbing. They continue to retain nautical terms by designating the near and off-sides port and starboard, and defining the hours of the day by so many bells. A beginner serves three months on probation; in four months he begins to become useful; but it takes about a year before he develops into a reliable fireman. The daily routine at the station savours of naval precision. Every hour has its specific duty. There are stables to clean, appliances to be attended to, drill to be done, and what not. Each horse must be exercised for half an hour daily, independently of any runs it may get, and fire alarms are tested twice every 24 hours from the station, and at least once a week from the alarms. There is no specialization as regards appliances. Every man must know the duties appertaining to each, and they are constantly being changed from ladder to reel, reel to motor, motor to steamer, just the same as a gun crew. Thus they become equal to any emergency. Punctually at 9 o'clock each morning they are 'closed up' at appliances to impress upon them the numbers they occupy for the 24 hours. This prevents any liability to confusion which might result from the frequent changes. Eight till 4 are the hours of the ordinary routine, after which comes watchroom duty from 4 till 10 and from 10 till 8.

— Glimpse of Fire Station life.—

Song has been invoked to describe the policeman's lot as 'not a happy one;' but that of the fireman? Constantly on duty he is practically a prisoner in the station save when each eighth day brings 24 hours' leave. Even then a blaze of any consequence will summon him post haste to his work again. Ordinarily he cannot 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 post. 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 consequence 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 display to advantage exactly what they are capable of. Nothing is anticipated. The turn out is made from "scratch" and the ladder, smoke basket, escalading, and rescue work are all done by the men according to the daily charge. 'Fake' shows for effect find no place with Superintendent Rickwood. One of the chief drawbacks to the Wakefield street block has been the absence of a gymnasium, but this is about to be remedied by the provision of a well-equipped structure 45 x 28 ft. They are handy men, these fire-men. All the smithing and carpentering is done by them, and they have lately shown their skill as builders by adding another brick story of six rooms and a balcony to the men's quarters. In a week's time they will begin the erection of the gymnasium, and three months will be required to finish it. Lieut. Rickwood regards the gymnasium as a highly important factor in the training of the men,

because it keeps them supple and active. But it will also provide much needed accommodation where the men can amuse themselves. At present the only place to which they can retire is a small room which is really the billiard and best room. A pleasing variety has also been introduced by the formation of a dramatic party, and four entertainments given by the men have been well appreciated.

—Need for Proclaimed Protected Area.—

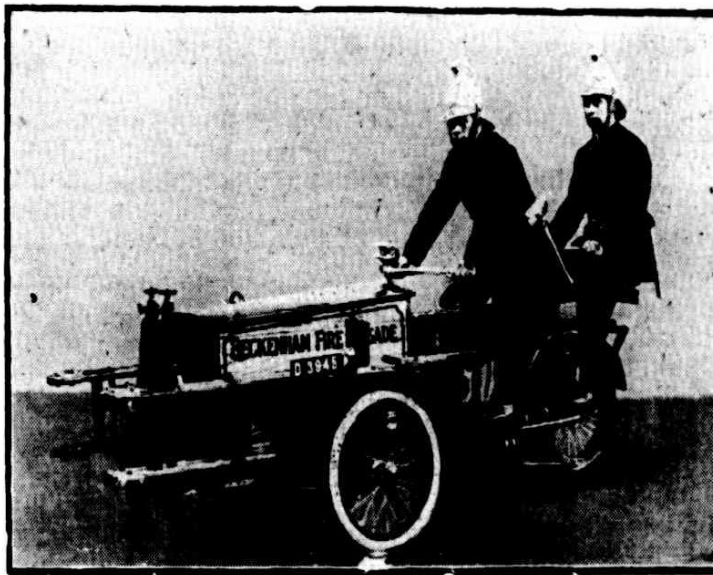
Yet, to be candid, the system has a weak point, which only legislative enactment seems capable of remedying. That is the need for a protected area proclaimed by Act of Parliament. The accompanying map shows what a patchwork system exists under the present go-as-you-please arrangement. Fancy large and go-ahead districts like Medindie, Prospect, Walkerville, and Woodville, boasting numerous costly and palatial residences, being unprotected! It is a concession to send fire fighting appliances to any unprotected part, and when their aid is forthcoming the unfortunate owner has to foot the bill for the services of plant and men, even though his property be completely destroyed. No; the voluntary system which leaves it to the discretion of municipal and district councils to join or not as they think fit has proved unsatisfactory. Other cities have proclaimed protected areas and left no option. Why not Adelaide? The standard of efficiency aimed at by the enthusiastic superintendent can not apparently be otherwise achieved. The secret of effective protection is found only in a system that permits one station to back up another, just as a player backs up his pieces on a chessboard. Directly one engine is called out another should be ready to take its place if the necessity arises. That is done now as far as possible, but it is far from perfection. Superintendent Rickwood has worked out the details of a scheme, and only awaits the opportunity to put it into operation. His idea is to have a proclaimed area of four and a half or five miles radius, the cost to the councils to be proportionate to their assessment. For a four and a half miles radius the cost for a thorough system of protection would not exceed an additional £6,000 a year. That would include a chain of communication to Port Adelaide. It would mean establishing four more stations, but with them no place would be beyond four and a half minutes' run of a brigade. Some of these stations would be equipped with Lilliput motors— three-wheeled 6-h.p. vehicles, which can travel 30 miles an hour, carry 500 ft. of hose, standpipes, and two lifesaving ladders. They would cost about £150 each, could be worked by two men and a probationer, and the maintenance would be small in contrast to horse vehicles. Beckenham Station— eight miles out of London had one of these motors, which in about a year answered 300 calls, travelled over 1,200 miles, and never once failed. In these days of building activity, when vacant blocks are rapidly being covered, and the risks in protected areas are increasing to such an extent that the resources of the brigades are taxed to keep pace with them, the un-enviable position of unprotected parts must become more pronounced, and must soon call for definite action.

—“Sound Policy.”—

Fire insurance companies have a staunch champion in Superintendent Rickwood. His advice to property owners is 'Insure! insure! insure!' Nobody could be more emphatic about it than he is. 'Why,' said he, 'although I am superintendent of brigades, and reside at the station, every stick of furniture I possess is insured. I know how easily fires are caused, and how quickly damage is done.' Mr. Rickwood has come across numerous instances in which householders have neglected to renew their policies, arguing that they had paid a certain amount in premiums for so many years, and had never had a fire. Yet the unwelcome visitation came within a few weeks of the lapsing of the policy, and they were faced not only with the damage, but with the cost for the brigade's attendance. "It is sound policy," said the superintendent, "to act on the presumption that the longer you have been without a fire the nearer you are to having one."



HEAD STATION, WAKEFIELD STEEET.



HANDY APPLIANCE FOR SCATTERED DISTRICTS.

The superintendent of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade has received the first consignment of a new station connection used in association with the fire sprinklers which have been installed in a number of the large Adelaide warehouses, and as soon as the necessary wires can be erected they will be fitted for duty. Under the present system, if a fire should occur in the premises in which the sprinkler pipes are reticulated, the operation of the sprays would ring a large fire gong erected in a conspicuous place outside the building. In such circumstances it would be necessary upon hearing the gong to rush to the nearest street alarm or telephone to warn the brigade. That means a waste of time, which the new instruments will avert. They will be linked with the sprinkler gong, with the result that immediately the gong sounds in the street another gong at the fire-station will be set in motion in such a way that the firemen will know exactly where the fire is situated—whether at the front, in the middle, or at the back of the premises affected, so that they will be able to go direct to the seat of the outbreak on reaching the scene. The sprinklers must be in operation before the gongs will be heard, so that before the firemen reach the place the automatic extinguishers will be at work and probably have the fire under control. Messrs D. & W. Murray, Harris, Scarfe, & Co., G. & R. Wills & Co. and Matthew Goode & Co., and the Australian Implement Company have already applied to be brought under the new system, and it is expected that many other firms will do so shortly.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Thursday 14 July 1910, page 7

FIRE IN DIVETT PLACE.

At 8.14 p.m. on Wednesday the Metropolitan Fire Brigade received a call to Divett place, off Flinders street. Adelaide. The motor engine, a steamer, and two reels turned out, and the staff found that a motor car and some timber, belonging to Mr. F. J. Woods, contractor, were alight. The fire was caused by the petrol vapour from the car coming into contact with the flame of one of the lamps. The car and timber were slightly damaged.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Saturday 12 February 1910, page 15

SMALL FIRE.

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade received a call shortly after 7 o'clock on Friday evening to a house on South terrace occupied by Mrs, Rodgers. It was found that a portion of a shed was damaged by fire.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Tuesday 26 April 1910, page 7

SMALL FIRE.

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade received a telephone call at 1.30 on Monday afternoon to a fire at a house on Bay road, Keswick, owned by Mr. J. Stacey. A bedroom and contents were destroyed. The cause of the outbreak is unknown. The occupants were away at the time of the occurrence.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Tuesday 26 April 1910, page 5

FIRE AT KESWICK.

At 1.30 pm on Monday the Fire Brigade were appraised of an outbreak of fire at Bay-road, Keswick. The brigade promptly responded to the call, and on arriving at the scene found a weatherboard tenement, owned and occupied by J. Stacey, in flames. A good stream of water was available, and the fire was confined to a bedroom which, together with its contents, was badly damaged. The cause of the outbreak is unknown. It is not known whether the damage is covered by insurance.

Express and Telegraph (Adelaide, SA : 1867 - 1922), Thursday 19 May 1910, page 1

FIRE IN GILLES ARCADE

ESTIMATED DAMAGE, £800

THE BRIGADE DO GOOD WORK,

Shortly after 12.30 p.m. on Thursday a fire was noticed at Gilies Arcade, Currie street. The Fire Brigade was immediately called from the Light-square and Currie street alarms and on the telephone from the office of Mr. J. W. Shannon, who owns the Arcade and whose office is situated in the same buildings. All the appliances in the head fire station, Wakefield-street, comprising the motor engine, two reels, the steamer, and the ladder, immediately turned out under Deputy-Superintendent Dickie, and they were soon on the scene of the fire. By the time they arrived, however, the flames had obtained a good hold on the woodwork, and on the horse-boxes and vehicles, which were stored on the premises, and a great volume of smoke was pouring out through the galvanized iron roof and from the three sides of the buildings, giving the impression that little of them would be saved..

The buildings in which the fire occurred are situated on the left side of the Arcade, which runs between Waymouth and Currie streets, and on the western side of them is a lane, which is connected with the Arcade, both at the north and south ends. Thus they are completely isolated from any other buildings, except that the same roof covers the whole arcade. It was thus fairly easy for the fire-fighters to get at the seat of the fire, and Mr. Dickie told a representative of "The Advertiser" afterwards that immediately they got the water well on all danger of the fire getting out of control ceased.

The flames were attacked from three sides — north, south, and west—simultaneously, and the water quickly subdued the fire. It was generally considered, however, that had it not been for the early discovery of the outbreak, and the prompt arrival of the brigade, much more damage would have resulted. As it is, the damage is computed at about £800. Mr. A. J. Manuel, who rented the portion in which the fire originated, was the principal loser. He had some 21 vehicles, including a drag, in the building, and all were destroyed. Unfortunately his insurance policy had run out a fortnight previously, and as he only had the lease for another five months he did not renew it, thinking that the premises were an unlikely place for a fire to originate. He estimates his loss at £600.

An Aeroplane Destroyed.

The Bleriot monoplane which Mr. F. B. Jones had imported some time previously, and which had been shown to the public in Messrs. John Martin & Co.'s magic cave, was stored on the premises, and that also was destroyed. Fortunately, Mr. Jones had that covered by insurance. The buildings, which were not totally destroyed, were insured in the Central Insurance Company.

The thick smoke which marked the fire in the earlier stages made it almost impossible for the firemen to see one another. That fact was responsible for an amusing incident. A batch of firefighters were working on the flames from the south side, when another lot pulled down the western gate abutting the lane and turned their hose full on what appeared to be the heart of the fire. Immediately there arose from the other side of the smoke yells of astonishment and insistent advice to "Chuck it up." Apparently the powerful jet of water had gone right through and was striking the men on the other side of the haze. As their advice had no effect the victims of the drenching retaliated in like manner, turning their hose on the men in the lane. The manoeuvre quickly had the desired effect and the firemen in the lane devoted themselves to other portions of the building.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Wednesday 6 July 1910, page 9

SMALL FIRE.

The fire brigade received a call at 2.5 p.m. on Tuesday from Gawler place. The blaze was located in premises occupied by Mr. G. A. Goyder, an assayer. The fire was caused through a defective flue in connection with furnace, and a small portion of the roof was damaged. The

building is owned by the South Australian Company, and the block is insured for £1,950 in the South British Company. Mr. Goyder's plant is insured for £300 in the Manchester Insurance Company.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Tuesday 6 September 1910, page 9

FIRE BRIGADE STATION

ADDITIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS,

The Metropolitan Fire Brigade Station has a reputation for being up to date, and the efficiency of the staff has gained for it praise even from countries extending beyond the limits of the Commonwealth. Lieut. W. G. Rickwood, who superintends the working of the brigade, is an enthusiast, and this quality, combined with a thorough knowledge of fire-fighting, is the main contributing factor of his successful administration. When seen by a reporter on Monday he stated that everything was upside down, as a large amount of building work was being completed and other structures were in course of erection. However, the whole establishment presented the appearance of a battleship cleared for action, and it was difficult for the untrained eye to appreciate his ideas of topsy-turveydom. Brass facings and other metallic substances presented a highly burnished appearance in every direction, and the general impression conveyed was that the brigade was ready for any emergency. Towards the rear of the premises it was noticeable that a considerable portion of the old coach house, together with the blacksmith and plumber shops, had been removed. Mr. Rickwood explained that these are now located in Angas street, where additional land has been acquired for the purposes of the brigade.

—Gymnasium to be Provided.—

The space vacated by these old premises will be devoted to the erection of a gymnasium, and already all the material required for the construction of the building is on the ground. Mr. Rickwood is a firm believer in giving the men under his command abundance of exercise, and he states this was not possible with the means he had at his command previously. He considers horizontal bars, boxing gloves, and foils are not sufficient to keep men in fettle to make them firefighters, and it is his intention in the future to compel every man to undertake a severe course in gymnastics. With the duties they have to perform he maintains it is absolutely essential their bodies should be lithe and all muscles well developed, and this may be accomplished only by systematic training. With the meagre appliances the men had at their disposal in the past, he considered it surprising they achieved such good results, and he supposed it was due to the fact that the staff recognised how much depended upon physical fitness. The gymnasium will occupy a space of 50 x 30 ft., with a height of 20 ft., and every means will be provided to enable the men to train thoroughly.

— Other Improvements.—

A second story has just been added to the staff's quarters, and the work is a credit to the "handy men" under Mr. Rickwood's command. It might not be generally known that all of the building undertaken at the station has been done by the firemen in their spare time. The perfection of the system in operation in Adelaide provides these moments of "leisure." A balcony has also been constructed in front of the upper story, and a platform provided above the top flat for drill purposes, so that practice may be indulged in with the telescopic ladder, and the brigade trained in bringing down individuals from the summits of burning buildings. A balcony has also been added to the married's men's quarters, and this should prove a great convenience to the wives and children of firemen living in the top story. The old wooden tower, which has done service for so many years is now found to be useless owing to the construction of taller buildings in the city, and Mr. Rickwood states it is not quite so safe as he desires. This will be demolished, and a steel tower, 10 ft. higher, will take its place. This additional height, he considers, will give the members of his staff an uninterrupted view of all the surrounding country. A large shed, with brick walls and floor, has also been built for the

accommodation of reserve appliances, and in this at the pre-sent time repose a large steamer and the big escape ladder.

—A New Watchroom. —

The Superintendent states the old watch-room was too noisy, as it abutted on Wakefield street, where there is now an immense amount of tram traffic. This not only disengaged the attention of the man on duty, but prevented his hearing telephonic messages accurately. It was also too much available to the calling public. To obviate these difficulties a room has been prepared for the reception of the switchboard more towards the interior of the building, and here again the general utility of the staff has been exemplified. The old wooden floors have been taken out and replaced with concrete, surmounted by a tasteful de-sign in tiles. The various large business establishments which have the sprinkler system of extinguishers installed have already been connected with the new watch-room, and these alarms were tested officially on Monday with satisfactory results.

— Petrol versus Horse Power. —

It was evident Mr. Rickwood has more than a kindly regard for the handsome petrol motor fire engine which occupies a space near to the main entrance, and like Mr. Lee, of the Melbourne Brigade, he is confident it is only a matter of a comparatively short period before horse traction in firework will be a thing of the past. With the good roads encountered around Adelaide there is, in his opinion, nothing to prevent the general use of petrol. The motor engine now being used has never failed to do all that was asked of it, and as a speed of 30 miles an hour may be exacted from the 55-horsepower engine it carries, one could not require anything bet-ter. During greasy weather Mr. Rickwood considers the rapid turning of corners from wood-paved roads, with horse-drawn vehicles will be a source of danger, but with the twin-section solid rubber tires on the petrol engine he does not anticipate any trouble from sideslips.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Monday 3 October 1910, page 11

A FALSE ALARM.

At 5.53 p.m. on Sunday the Metropolitan Fire Brigade received a call from the Gilbert-street fire alarm. On arrival it was found that the glass of the alarm box had been smashed by some unknown person.

Daily Herald (Adelaide, SA : 1910 - 1924), Wednesday 26 October 1910, page 5

SMALL FIRE.

The fire brigade received a call at 8.58 p.m. Tuesday evening to the Earl of Aberdeen Hotel, Hurtle square. The out-break, however, was only an ignition among some rubbish at the back and was speedily quelled.

Port Pirie Recorder and North Western Mail (SA : 1898 - 1918), Wednesday 2 November 1910, page 3

DISASTROUS FIRE IN ADELAIDE.

BAGSHAW & SONS' FACTORY, PARTLY DESTROYED.

Adelaide. Tuesday.

Early this morning J. S. Bagshaw and Sons' engineering factory, which extends over almost the whole of a three-acre block of land in the West End of the City, was partly destroyed by fire. On the north side the buildings face Waymouth-street, on the East side is Elizabeth-street, on the west Crowther-street, and on the south side the premises adjoin a row of cottages known as Williams' Terrace. It was in the south-eastern portion of the building that

the fire was noticed at about 3.45. The alarm was at once given, and five minutes later Superintendent Rick-wood, with a large contingent of men and appliances, had arrived.

A fierce wind was blowing, and it was soon apparent that the premises and machinery in which the fire was raging were doomed. The Superintendent concentrated the efforts of his men in the direction of saving the cottages facing Franklin-street and the northern portion of the works.

Awakened by the machinery as it crashed down, and the intense heat, people living in the vicinity began to remove their valuables, and when light of day appeared Crowther-street was filled with groups of frightened people, many of whom were only half-dressed.

Sparks were ascending to a great height, and as the wind veered round the flames ignited the inflammable material and burnt up everything within reach. Pile upon pile of seasoned wood, intended for use in the manufacture of winnowers and other agricultural machinery proved an easy prey to the ravages of the fire, and the flames, fanned by the wind, spread from one side of the building to the other.

The efforts of the firemen to prevent the spread of the flames were accompanied by considerable danger to life and limb, and two firemen received injuries during the early attack on the fire.

Gradually victory was achieved, and by 5.30 the firemen were able to leave the northern portion of the building, in which was stored thous-ands of pounds worth of machinery and tools. At 9 o'clock the fire was still burning, but all danger of its spreading was at an end.

It is not yet possible to estimate the loss, which will be considerable. The damage is thought to be covered by insurance.

The fire is believed to have originated in an old portion of the premises, About 230 men are employed at the works, but as the Northern portion is saved, operations will be carried on, although not nearly to the full extent.

Register (Adelaide, SA : 1901 - 1929), Wednesday 2 November 1910, page 8

EARLY MORNING FIRE.

Bagshaw's Premises Guttled. Loss of Valuable Plant.

Early on Tuesday morning a fire broke out on the premises of J. S. Bagshaw and Sons, Limited, agricultural implement makers, Adelaide, and within about two hours the whole of the rear portion of the place—which occupied a block bounded on the east by Elizabeth street, on the north by Waymouth street, on the west by Crowther street, and on the south by a lane at the rear of Franklin street— was completely gutted. Although the fire had probably been smouldering for several hours, it was not until about 3.30 a.m. that neighbours had their attention attracted, and by then the flames had got a thorough hold. The fire station was communicated with a few minutes before 4 o'clock, and at that time the huge structure was a sea of flames. Fanned by a strong east wind, tongues of fire leapt from woodwork to woodwork with startling rapidity, and in a few minutes after the firemen's arrival half the building collapsed.

—Path of the Flames.—

As the burning building was constructed chiefly of galvanized iron and stored with highly inflammable material, such as well-seasoned timbers and oils, there was absolutely no resistance to the flames, and all that the man with the hose could do was to prevent the conflagration from spreading to adjoining cottage property, and to the newer portion of the premises which faced Waymouth street, and was used chiefly for the storage of hardware. The sections swept by the flames comprised the office, casting room, blacksmiths' shop, draftsmen's room, engine room, toolhouse, fitting shop, assembly room, where the parts were

put together, upstairs showroom, and a brick storeroom containing a quantity of oils and benzine.

—Busy Season Calamity.—

The disaster came at a particularly unfortunate time, as the staff had been working at high pressure to cope with the demand for winnowers for the coming harvest. The employes had been putting in overtime for some weeks, and on Monday quite a number had been engaged until about 9 p.m. in the assembly and fitting departments completing a consignment of the implements mentioned. When they left everything was apparently all right upon the premises.

—Alarmed Neighbourhood. —

Exactly how the fire originated is unknown; but there were indications that its source was in the woodwork shop, where the bodies of the implements were made up. There was no night watchman, but a caretaker lived near by, and in neighbouring cottages were also several employes of the firm who gave an oversight to the place. Residents of Elizabeth and Crowther streets were awakened at an early hour by the crackling of woodwork, the roaring of flames, and, in some cases, by a glare on their windows. Shouts of alarm came from various directions, but it remained for Albert Haley, who lived immediately opposite to the burning premises in Elizabeth street, to summon the fire brigade, which he did from Light square at 3.55 a.m. Notwithstanding the early hour scores of people assembled to watch the progress of the fire. Many women and girls with their hair in "good-night" plaits were among the spectators. A strong force of constables were on duty to keep the roadways clear.

—The Brigades' Work—

Superintendent Rickwood turned out with the whole of the Adelaide appliances and the full staff. The outstations were also notified. Previous to the actual summons by the dropping of the alarm shutter a policeman telephoned that there was a big fire showing up in the neighbourhood of Light square. On the arrival of the brigade the whole of the rear portion of the premises nearest to Franklin street was well alight. Flames were bursting through the roof, and some parts had already fallen in. "From the moment of my arrival," said Lieut. Rickwood, immediately after his return to headquarters, "I could see we could do nothing beyond confining the outbreak to the affected area. I got nine lines of hose to work and completely surrounded the block. Wind was blowing hard from the eastward, and debris and sparks were carried fully a mile away. In the circumstances we were particularly lucky in restricting the fire zone. I brought both the steamer and motor into operation. The water pressure was not any too good at the outset, but it improved when the turncock got to work. The latter concentrated the flow from other sources, and thus gave us a good supply. Evidently the blaze started on the south-western side of the buildings, and a portion of the roof in this quarter had fallen in on our arrival. We had not been on the scene more than a few minutes before the whole thing collapsed. The fire was retained in the places which were well alight when we came upon the scene. The intensity of the heat can be understood from the fact that furniture in an adjoining property in Crowther street, occupied by Mr. G. Wetzel, ignited." — Cottages Endangered.— Asked for his opinion regarding the danger of cottage property being adjacent to workshops in which inflammable material is contained, Lieut. Rickwood said he had frequently emphasized the necessity for greater caution in this respect. Dwellings should certainly not be in close proximity, because in nine cases out of 10 the brigade had no chance to save them once a conflagration attained anything like serious proportions. In the present instance it was scarcely possible to get anything more highly inflammable than the material stored in the destroyed property.

—Firemen's Fall.—

The principal incident in connection with the operations of the brigade occurred a little after 5 o'clock, when four of the firemen were at work on a galvanized iron structure, attempting to check the progress of the flames. Suddenly the roof beneath them collapsed through the weight imposed upon it, and they had a fall of about 12 ft. Senior Fireman Wood sprained an

ankle, and was carried away suffering somewhat from shock, but the others escaped with a slight shaking.

—A Family's Predicament.—

Mr. G. Wetzel, an employe of Bagshaw and Sons, whose home is in Crowther street, lived closer than any one else to the outbreak, and the experiences of himself and family were unenviable. The house-hold was awakened by the roaring of the fire, which Mr. Wetzel believed to have originated in the toolhouse, about 30 ft. away from the side of his dwelling. Danger was at once apparent, and the husband, wife, and five children, in scanty at-tire, rushed out of doors. Articles of furniture and personal possessions were hurriedly removed in a considerable quantity to a lane on the side of the cottage furthest away from the doomed workshops; but there was not time to save the con-tents of two rooms nearest to Bagshaw's from burning. Smoke poured so densely into the rear part of the cottage that it was impossible to see or breathe there longer than a minute or two at a time.

—The Firm of Bagshaw.—

The name of Bagshaw is well known throughout the State, it having been identified with the manufacture of agricultural implements since the earliest days of the State, when the late Mr. J. S. Bagshaw began in an unpretentious manner in 1839 the Pioneer Machinery Works, which have since grown into one of the most important industries of the kind in Adelaide, with employment for about 200 operatives. The head of the present business is Mr. J. A. Bagshaw, eldest son of the founder, and with him are associated Messrs. E. G., T. H., and T. S. Bagshaw. Mr. J. A. Bagshaw started as an apprentice in the works of his father, and learnt the trade in its entirety. In his calling he has exhibited marked ability, and while a boy built a steam engine in all its parts. He was the first South Australian to do so, and as a reward for his enterprise was presented with a gold medal by the Royal Agricultural Society. He has patented several useful inventions in connection with farming pursuits. Mr. Bagshaw's interests were wrapped up in the business, and news of the disaster came as a great shock to him.

—Serious Losses.—

Employes of the firm began to arrive just before 7.30, and were bewildered to find that their usual duties had been so abruptly suspended. Heads of the firm received many expressions of sympathy, and men were anxious to know in what way their services would be useful. The Managing Director (Mr. E. G. Bagshaw) stated regarding the extent of the damage:—"The fire has, I am sorry to say, wiped out practically the whole of the productive part of our establishment, and has simply left a small part of the assembly areas. The machine shop in its entirety, with a splendid lot of costly appliances, has gone. It was a most valuable plant, and one not nearly covered by insurance, as we have lately been extending it rapidly, with the addition of higher-grade tools than those replaced. Numerous small portions of the machinery in use ran into a cost of hundreds of pounds.

— Years of Labour Annulled.—

"All our drawings, patterns, templets, and standards have been reduced to ashes. They constituted practically the heart and soul of such a business, and in one morning has gone what it took the firm many years to gather and get to a highly satisfactory pitch. In a sense some of the benefits of 60 years' working have been lost. We have fortunately got sufficient drawings to enable us to stick to our standard patterns; but it will take years to regain what we had by us yesterday.

—"Worst Possible Time."—

"A stinging circumstance in relation to the fire is that it came upon the establishment just at a time when and, until Christmas, we should be in the midst of our boom in sending forth a big output of agricultural machinery for the coming harvest. Work of preparation that had gone on

in the various departments for the past six or eight months, from which the firm would otherwise only now be deriving benefit, has gone for practically naught. It amounts virtually to the loss of a whole year's trading. A couple of months hence the calamity would have been bad enough, but at this juncture it could not be worse. There were in the establishment, including mechanical and office staffs and others connected with the business, about 250 hands. In the factory proper there were about 220. We were going until 9 o'clock at night with them to cope with orders for winnowers, extending to February next. It will be possible to find employment for a good many of the men in sorting up the ruins, and in the assembling department, which is still left, there will be room for a further number. The firm has a new foundry in course of construction at Mile End, and had about 12 months more to continue in the present premises, after which the hub of operations would largely have been transferred. In its existing stage, however, the new site can be of little or no advantage."

— Maintaining Trade. —

Questioned regarding insurances, Mr. Bagshaw said:—"Protection of that kind may recoup a firm to some extent for loss of buildings or plant, but the effect of trade dislocation could never be adequately covered. There is an additional storeroom on the other side of Elizabeth street, and luckily the greater part of the stock on hand was not damaged. By making strenuous efforts we hope to be able to avoid disappointing a large portion of our customers, and as a majority of the local firms have generously offered to help us we will probably be able to get through without any great disruption of trade. It may be necessary, however, to cancel a good many of the later orders received. At present it is out of the question even to roughly conjecture in hard cash the actual amount of damage."

— Insurances. —

The insurances amount to £10,000, mostly in the Liverpool, London, and Globe Office.



AFTER THE FIRE.

Chronicle (Adelaide, SA : 1895 - 1954), Saturday 5 November 1910, page 43

BIG CITY FIRE.

AT BAGSHAW & SONS'.

ENORMOUS DAMAGE DONE.

Early on Tuesday morning Messrs. J. S. Bagshaw & Sons' engineering factory, which extends over almost the whole of a three-acre block of land in the west end of the city, was partly destroyed by fire. On the north side the buildings face Waymouth-street, on the east side is Elizabeth-street, on the west Crowther-street, and on the south side the premises adjoin a row of cottages known as Williams-terrace. It was in the south-eastern portion of the building that the fire was noticed about 3.45. The alarm was at once given, and five minutes later Superintendent Rickwood, with a large contingent of men and all appliances, had arrived. A fierce wind was blowing, and as it was soon apparent that the premises and the machinery in which the fire was raging were doomed to destruction, the superintendent concentrated the efforts of his men in the direction of saving the cottages facing Franklin-street and the northern portion of the works. Awakened by the machinery as it crashed down, and the intense heat, the people living in the vicinity at once became aware of the fact that at any moment their premises might be enveloped in flames. They began to remove their valuables, and when the light of day appeared Crowther-street was filled with groups of frightened people, many of whom were only half dressed. Mothers could be seen rushing away from the scene of the fire with a baby in one arm and some of their property in the other. Sparks were ascending to a great height, and as the wind veered round the flames ignited inflammable material, and the fire was then at its worst. The flames were ascending to a height of 60 ft., and were licking up everything within reach. Galvanized iron was twisted about as if it was no stronger than paper. As the fire lit up the adjacent surroundings, the people could discern the cosily machinery, which had only recently been installed, falling in a heap to the ground. With nine lines of hose, the steamer and motor, the firemen at first, owing to the rather poor pressure of water, found difficulty in subduing the flames, but subsequently a better supply was available, and with it they were able to confine the fire within a limited area. Piles after piles of seasoned wood intended for use in the manufacture of winnowers and other agricultural machinery, proved an easy prey to the ravages of the fire, and the flames, fanned by the wind, spread from one side of the building to the other. The heat was more than could be endured, and the residents of the cottages in Franklin-street were obliged to leave their homes and view the work of destruction from the other side of the street. When the fire reached the paint shed, in which was stored a quantity of benzine and oils, the flames shot into the air in the most brilliant colors and fantastic shapes. Giving the Alarm. Mr. H. Haley, who resides in Elizabeth-street, was the first to give the alarm to the brigade. He was called by his brother about 3.30 and the flames had then a good hold on the premises. "I gave the alarm from Light-square," he remarked to a reporter, "The fire might have been going about half an hour before I observed it. A strong east wind was blowing at the time and the flames were raging fiercely. The southern portion of the block and the offices, which were in Elizabeth-street, were burning. The galvanized iron walls were red hot and, fanned by the strong wind, the blaze made great headway." The Work of the Firemen. The scene presented in the early morning light was a weird one. The huge wooden rafters were all ablaze and the roar of the flames was punctuated by the crash of falling timber and iron. On account of the fierce wind the flames spread with amazing quickness. The firemen were at work with a powerful line of hose in both Elizabeth and Crowther streets, amid an endless shower of sparks and blinding clouds of smoke. Cottages in Danger. The flying sparks threatened to set alight the various cottages in the vicinity and the residents were all awakened and every preparation made to leave them at once in the event of the blaze extending to the buildings. One house on the southern side of the premises was practically ruined by the flames and the back premises of a house in Crowther-street caught alight. The flames rose high and illuminated the whole of the western portion of the city, and the spectacle was a weird one as the shades of night changed to grey dawn. Some idea of the magnitude of the flames might be gained from the fact that although the establishment is nearly a quarter of a mile from West-terrace a representative of "The Advertiser," who resides there, was awakened by the

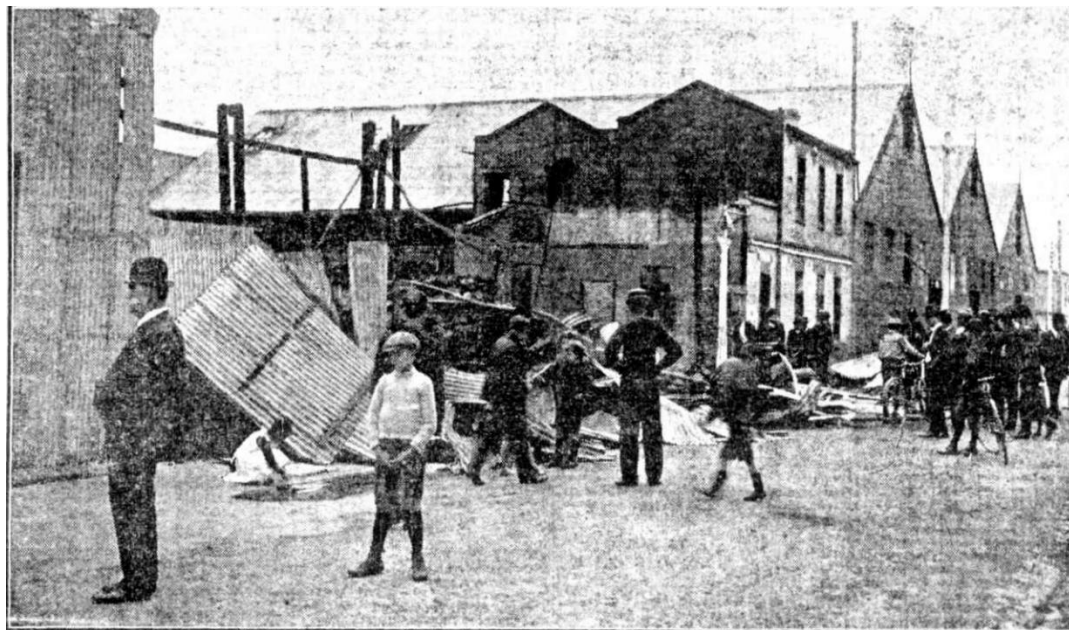
illumination shining through a window soon after the fire was reported to have occurred. The firemen had a particularly severe task. Their efforts to prevent the spread of the flames and to extinguish the fierce showers of sparks, which threatened to endanger the cottages in the vicinity, were attended with risk to life and limb. Two of the firemen received injuries during the early attack upon the fire. Panic-Stricken Residents. The spectators who gathered round the blazing premises related how they came to know of the outbreak. Some stated that they had been restless in their sleep during the hour previous to the reported time, of the outbreak. Many of the residents were panic stricken, as it appeared as if their houses would be destroyed, and a wild rush was made for the streets. As many valuables as it was possible to collect were taken with them. Some thought that the flames were on their own premises, and the density of the smoke and rattle and crash of the falling timbers and iron, together with the roar of the flames, made the scene most confusing. A Lucky Escape. Just a few yards from the paint shop lived Mr. George Wetzel, an employe of the firm, with his wife and children. He had only left the house a few minutes when tons of ironwork smashed in through the roof into the bedroom. The furniture was strewn about. So fierce was the heat that the pictures on the wall ignited. The varnish and paint on the doors of the houses on the opposite side of the street peeled off. Mr. G. Wetzel, who has been an employe of the firm for seven years, stated that in his opinion the fire originated in the toolhouse, just at the rear. They were called up about 3.45, and he then noticed that the machinery yard was in flames.

Interview With the Manager.

When interviewed Mr. Bagshaw, the manager of the firm, stated that the fire had originated in outbuildings situated in the old portion of the premises. Those rooms facing in a northerly direction had only been erected about 18 months ago. How the fire originated he was at a loss to understand. The caretaker, Norman, had inspected the works after the men had ceased work at 10 o'clock, and there were no indications then that the place was on fire. "We have," continued Mr. Bagshaw, "about 230 men employed here, and this is our busiest time of the year, and our men were working until 9 o'clock at night. But we hope to be able to give them employment. Fortunately, the northern portion of the building was saved, and as we have our rough stores in the shed and also units of machinery we shall be able to continue working. The office was destroyed, but the books and papers, I am glad to say, are all safe. Other firms have generously offered us assistance, but, of course, there will be some interruption to business, and in all probability orders for some classes of implements will have to be can-celled." "Yes," said Mr. Bagshaw, in answer to another question, "we are building works at Mile-End, but they will not be ready for occupation for some time yet. It is unfortunate that the fire should have occurred at this stage. We have just imported thousands of pounds worth of machinery." Fireman's Ankle Sprained. Superintendent Rickwood, when seen afterwards, said: — "The brigade received a call by telephone at 3.55 a.m., it being stated that there was a big fire at Light-square. Just afterwards we had the alarm from Light-square. We turned out all appliances, including out-stations. On arrival we found the place well alight, and we ran out nine lines of hose on the surrounding block. We also had the steamer and the motor pump at work, our object being to confine the fire within its then present limits. I think the fire originated between the cottage and oil store. A couple of slight accidents occurred through the back portion of the roof falling in, three men being hurt. Senior Fireman Wood sprained his ankle and had to be removed, but the other two were only slightly injured and were able to continue work. The wind was blowing from the east, and undoubtedly we made a 'good stop,' considering the weather conditions and the progress the fire had made when we arrived. The lead connections melted with the heat, and as the gas escaped flames issued in all directions. The electric wires were also destroyed." The Loss. Gradually victory was achieved by the firemen and at 5.30 they were able to leave the northern portion of the building, in which was stored thousands of pounds worth of machinery and tools, be-sides large quantities of valves and brass-work. Had that portion of the premises caught alight the damage would have been much greater than the firm at present think they have sustained. What will be the loss it is not as yet possible to estimate, but some idea is conveyed when it is remembered that a large quantity of modern machinery — such as lathes worth £600 each—

which occupied three-quarters of an acre of floor space, was destroyed. The ironwork, of which the machinery is composed, was not heated to such an extent that it was twisted, but the temper of the machines has been burnt out. Besides the lathes, some of which had only recently been placed on their foundations, a dozen electric motors, varying in horsepower from 15 to 5, were destroyed, also a 60-h.p. gas engine, and innumerable machine tools and fixtures. At 9 o'clock the fire was still burning, but all danger of its spreading was at an end. The premises presented a pitiful appearance. Lying thick on the ground were heaps of ashes, and machinery fittings were trampled underfoot by the firemen as they dragged the heavy hoses about. Perched on the top of flimsy up-rights were large sheets of galvanized iron which, in consequence of the heat, had taken on a white surface. From a distance they looked like sails, and with fresh gusts of wind they were lifted and swayed about, and at any moment seemed likely to crash down amongst the curious crowd below. According to the Fire Brigade authorities, the building and contents were covered for £20,000 in the Liverpool, London, and Globe Company. Sympathy of Brother Manufacturers. At a meeting of the council of the Chamber of Manufactures on Tuesday afternoon, Mr. W. W. Forwood moved—"That a letter of sympathy be sent to Messrs. J. A. Bagshaw & Sons in the calamity they have sustained in the burning of their factory." Mr. W. Burford seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously.





THE RUINS AFTER THE FIRE AT MESSRS. J. S. BAGSHAW & SONS.

Excerpt from Wikiwand – (https://www.wikiwand.com/en/John_Stokes_Bagshaw)

In 1910 a fire in the Adelaide factory forced the implementation of a long-planned move to Victoria Street, Mile End between King Street and Hilton Road, once a wheat paddock. In 1911 Thomas H. Bagshaw's two sons Edward G. Bagshaw and Thomas Stokes Bagshaw, took over management of the company. In 1920, with the death of John A. Bagshaw, Vincent A. Zed (1885 – 15 August 1930), a longtime employee, was appointed governing director. In 1920 Bagshaws bought the Balaklava business of Illman and Sons. In 1924 the company was taken over by J. H. Horwood and Co. Ltd., and continued to operate as Horwood, Bagshaw Ltd.

Daily Herald (Adelaide, SA : 1910 - 1924), Wednesday 16 November 1910, page 5

BIG FIRE IN THE CITY.

Solomon's Furniture Warehouse

At 10 minutes to 3 o'clock this morning an alarm of fire was received from Solomon's Furniture Warehouse at the north-west corner of Hindmarsh-square. In a few minutes after the outbreak was first noticed flames were seen issuing from the first floor windows, and the whole square was lit up with a blaze of light. The brigade, under Superintendent Rickwood, was soon on the spot, but by that time the flames had taken possession of the whole building and their efforts to stop the fire in its initial stage were unavailing. They, therefore, confined their attention to pouring streams of water into the burning interior. The building is a four-storey one, with offices, &c., in the basement. The corner premises are occupied by Mr. N. Solomon as a furniture warehouse, and the remaining floors by Messrs. Whillas and Ormiston, general printers, bookbinders, &c. It is a massive structure. At 3.15 a.m. the flames were spreading westwards to Mr. C. H. Lehmann's saddlery and harness repairing depot, at the corner of Twin-street. Part of the basement is occupied by the representative of Cadbury Cocoa, and though the fire had damaged this part of the building the water had perhaps had a worse effect. At 3.20 a.m., when this edition went to press the fire was still burning fiercely. The flames shortly after 3.20 a.m. spread to that portion of the block facing Twin-street, and the whole block was doomed.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Thursday 17 November 1910, page 12

GRENFELL-STREET FIRE.

SA Country Fire Service Promotions Unit
www.fire-brigade.asn.au
8 July 2026

A BIG BLAZE.

GENDERS' BUILDINGS PARTIALLY DESTROYED.

Bare walls and a heap of smouldering debris in the basement were all that was left of the front portion of Genders' Buildings, Grenfell-street, when people reached their places of business in the city on Wednesday morning. From about five minutes to 3 o'clock until shortly after 5 o'clock, the full strength of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade was engaged in a vigorous fight with a fire that broke out, it is believed, in the eastern portion of the first floor, and though blackened ruins now meet the view, the firemen had the satisfaction of knowing that they kept the outbreak within bounds, and checked its progress in the rear portion of the building. The alarm was given by Constable Nicholls, on duty in Grenfell-street, at 2.51.



THE SCENE OF THE FIRE. photo, H. Krischock.

He noticed flames appearing from an upper storey window, and immediately summoned the brigade from the Arcade alarm, close to the scene of the fire. The response was prompt, but smart as the turnout was the building was well alight and practically doomed before a line of hose could be run out. The property a four storeyed building occupied the whole of a small block, about 100 ft. x 90 ft., with frontages to Grenfell-street and Hindmarsh-square. At the rear is a narrow thoroughfare, Hindmarsh-lane, and on the western side is Twin street. Messrs. N. Solomon & Co., furniture importers, occupied the corner shop on the ground floor, and a considerable portion of the first floor. Messrs. Whillas and Ormiston, printers and stationers had an office frontage to Grenfell-street, and the second floor for their printing department. The other tenants were Messrs. Julius Rosenfeld (merchant), Kornblum and Co. (wholesale agents), A. O. Thomas (biograph agent), C. K. Baker (sole-sewer), Geo. D. Lockwood, W. Essex & Co. (manufacturers' agents), C T. Henderson, W. Coward (engraver),

Hicks, Southgate, and Co. (tailors), G. S. Brokenshire (manufacturers' agent), C. H. Lehmann (saddler), Cadbury Bros., and the Adelaide Clothing Company.

Brigade's Splendid Work.

When the brigade arrived the whole of the front portion of the building was well alight and roaring like a furnace. Flames were appearing from many of the windows, and as Messrs. Whillas & Ormiston's stock was of a highly inflammable nature, nothing could stop the progress of the flames, which spread rapidly from floor to floor, until the whole of the Grenfell-street frontage was wrapped in flames. The heat was intense, and as a strong north-east wind was blowing it was evident that nothing could save that portion of the building. Superintendent Rickwood summoned assistance from the out-stations, and soon had nine lines of hose playing on the flames. but so fierce was the fire that even when the pumps were brought into requisition to increase the pressure no impression appeared to be made on the conflagration. Messrs Solomons' large stock, which had been considerably increased by shipments of linoleum during the past few days, added fuel to the fire, and the inflammable contents of the upper floors were quickly engulfed. As the fire progressed it obtained a hold of the floors separating the different flats. That occupied by Messrs. Whillas & Ormiston was the first to go, and as the machinery crashed through the floor below and into the basement the spectacle was awe-inspiring, huge tongues of flames and a shower of sparks shooting up into the air for 50 or 60 ft. above the top of the building. The top-most floor shortly afterwards fell through, converting that portion of the building into a veritable furnace in which the fire raged without restraint.

Portions of the Building Saved

At an early stage in the struggle Superintendent Rickwood realised the futility of endeavoring to get at the seat of the fire so he directed attention to the task of saving the northern and western portions of the building, as well as safeguarding those premises on the other side of Hindmarsh lane and Twin street. Water was, therefore, played on these properties from time to time to keep the walls cool, and the concentration of attention on the other portions of Gender's Buildings saved them from the fire, though the contents were badly damaged by water and smoke. It was feared that as the floors of the front part of the building gave way the walls would collapse, and as Twin street is a narrow thoroughfare, the firemen's work in that locality was attended with a good deal of danger. Fortunately, the floors came down without affecting the immediate stability of the walls, though the police were careful to keep that street clear of traffic throughout the morning.

Smouldering Ruins.

At 5.45 a.m. the brigade had the fire under control, but it was not till several hours afterwards that the flames were entirely extinguished. At 9 o'clock the smouldering ruins were the centre of attraction to hundreds of spectators. The firemen were then busily engaged cleaning up, sweeping water from rooms that were untouched by the flames, and playing hoses on the ruins. Looking at the gutted building from Grenfell-street the spectator could detect an occasional burst of flame from the interior of Messrs. Whillas & Ormiston's office on the ground floor. The place occupied by Messrs. E. Solomon & Co's showrooms was merely a heap of debris, including all that was left of a valuable piano, a pile of bedsteads, the ironwork of which was twisted into fantastic shapes by the heat of the fire, and the ruined printing machines that had fallen through from the second floor. Beyond was the lift wall running to the full height of the building.

Superintendent Rickwood Interviewed.

When seen at the Fire Station during the morning Superintendent Rickwood said "At 2.51 we received a call from the Arcade alarm, which is just near the property that was destroyed. With all appliances we turned out from head station and on arrival I ordered out stations to attend. We found the three floors well alight from end to end and flames were shooting through the roof. We started work with nine lines of hose, but when the motor and steamers

were placed in position six lines of hose were attached to them. It was soon found that the building, as far as the eastern portion was concerned, was doomed to destruction, and we directed our attention towards confining the fire within the building. The wind was blowing fresh from the north-east, and as there was a risk of the fire spreading to buildings in Twin-street we kept them cool with a line of hose. At first the pressure of water was not good, but later on there was an improvement. It was like a roaring furnace, and the flames were shooting out of every window. So intense was the heat that the water acted like a spray. The fire, I think, originated in the eastern portion of the first floor. Aided by the strong wind it reached the premises occupied by the printer's, and when it ignited the in-flammable material the flat suddenly became on fire from end to end. The heavy machinery crashed down and then the flames, ascending to a height of 90 ft., made a grand sight. At 5.45 we had the fire under control." The Superintendent said the damage to the contents of the rooms on the Twin-street side of the building was caused by the bursting of a rising main, which was installed in the building for use in case of a fire. At one time the front wall was seen to bend forward and there was a fear that it would collapse but gradually it went back into its position.

The Buildings.

The block, which is known as Genders' Buildings, was erected in the early eighties by a company, of which Mr. J. C. Genders was the junior partner. This company carried on the business of saddlers' ironmongers, coachbuilders, and manufacturers, until the time of the bank failures, when the business was amalgamated with another city firm and the Phillipson estate, on whose land the structure had been erected, became the owners. The present owners are Messrs C. & E. Phillipson, Miss G. M. Phillipson and Mrs. E. C. Campbell and their agents are Messrs Hackett & Hunt. The premises were fully tenanted, the chief services being Messrs. Whillas & Ormiston and Messrs. N. Solomon and Co. The outer walls, which are of stone and brick (at the rear) were left standing but have been damaged by the intense heat. The building was insured in the Colonial Mutual Office for £8,000. The upper portion at the rear (abutting on Hindmarsh-place), was erected about 12 months ago, and some improvements were being effected there at the time of the fire.

Allowed Insurance To Lapse

Mr. Arthur O. Thomas, who conducts an agency for lanterns and bioscope, was the occupant of rooms in the basement facing the square. He was amongst the few whose stock was not destroyed by fire, but the damage by water was considerable. He said—"I had about £300 worth of Christmas films, printing valued at £100, and chemicals for which I paid £80, and, as you see, the water has done what fire failed to do. I am unfortunate in that only three weeks ago I allowed my insurance policy to lapse, as I intended to occupy larger premises shortly and to insure for an increased amount."

Solomon & Co.'s Loss.

Mr. N. Solomon, of Messrs. Solomon and Co., stated that he was yet unable to compute his loss, but it would be considerable. His stock was insured. "Only yesterday," he said, "I had a lot of stock brought into the shop. I occupied a considerable portion of the building, with my house furnishing salerooms. My shop included the south-eastern corner on the ground floor and the basement, as well as the first floor all along the eastern side. My shop was fully stocked, as I was getting ready for the Christmas trade. Some books and papers are in the safe, which has fallen, with the debris, into the basement, but all the papers, etc., which I had hanging in the office have gone. I see the remains of a new piano in the front shop. About two years ago a fire broke out in one of the upper floors early one evening, but it was detected in time and little damage was done. I left the shop at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, and when it was locked up then everything was in proper order.'

Employees Out of Work.

The Adelaide Clothing Company, although they suffered considerably, intend to restart work this morning. They have secured temporary premises in Gawler-place. They employ 53

hands. They received offers of assistance from a number of city firms, but one, in contradistinction to the kind action of the other business people, attempted to secure the services of the company's "buttonhole" hands. Messrs. Whillas & Ormiston's business will be seriously interfered with for some time. They employed between 50 and 60 hands.

Other Losses.

Messrs. Kornblum & Co. are amongst those who have suffered great loss. Valuable oilcloths and carpets proved an easy prey to the ravages of the fire. As far as can be estimated at present, over 40 per cent. of their stock has been destroyed. The manager is unable at present to give the value of his stock. Mr. C. H. Lehmann rented the premises at the corner of Grenfell and Twin streets. He had a stock of saddlery, worth £400, and although it was not touched by fire his loss will be severe as the leather is saturated with water.

Whillas & Ormiston's Loss.

This portion of the building on the ground and first floor, occupied by the printing firm of Whillas & Ormiston (Messrs. O. Higginbottom, G Craig, and J. L. Leal) was completely gutted. "I don't think there is as much as a sheet of paper left," said Mr Craig. A number of valuable machines were totally destroyed, including the following cylinder printing machines:—Special double-royal, double-royal, royal and crown; and the platen machines were:—Crown-folio, two demi-folios, and two foolscap-folios. Other machines were guillotine, two ruling machines, small cutting machine, mailboard cutting machine, perforating machine, two numbering machines, four stapling machines, three electric motors, two presses, one blocking machine, two round cornering machines. The total value of the machines is roughly estimated by Mr Craig at £1,700, the warehouse stock at £3,800, and shop stock at £700; total £3,800; out no definite computation can be made until the books are secured from the strongroom, which alone is believed to have preserved intact its contents. There are between 40 and 50 employes, some of whom will for a time be out of employment, but the firm has obtained temporary premises in Pirie-street, and will purchase new machinery at once for the purpose of pushing on with orders. Work will proceed as usual almost immediately.

Cadbury Bros.

Mr. T. Coley, local representative of Cadbury Bros., was seen contemplatively studying the ruins of his store in the basement, which bore as hopeless an aspect as could possibly be imagined. Roof, floors, machinery, and burning stock all fell into the basement and the stock was buried beneath a heap of burning refuse. Mr Coley said he had just got his Christmas stock in, and every box was gone. There was fully £2,500 worth, he believed, but could not tell definitely without his books.

Hicks, Southgate, & Co.

Messrs. Hicks, Southgate, & Co. carried on a tailoring business on the western side of the building and occupied portion of the ground and first floors. The flames reached the upper portion of the premises, but were overcome before the rolls of tweeds and serges in the shop below were burnt. However most of the shop stock has been damaged by the water which was poured into the place.

The Insurances.

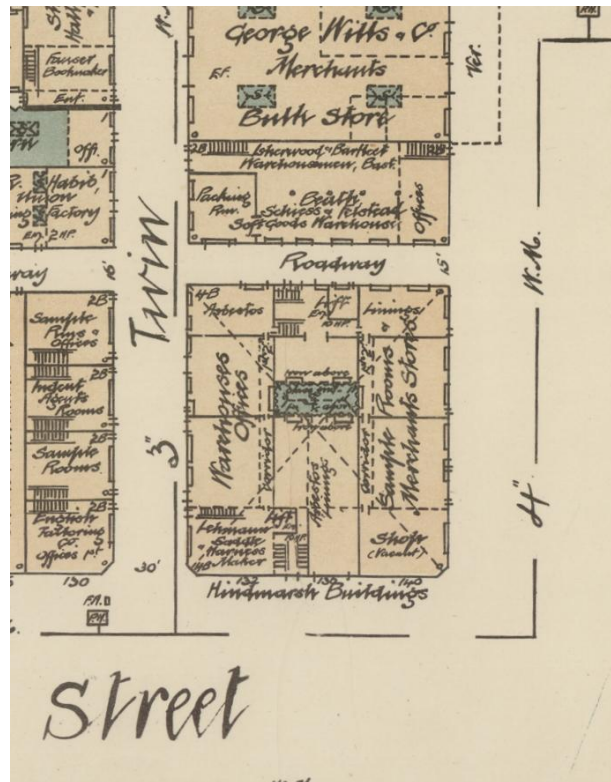
The insurances are:—On the building, £8,000 in the Colonial Mutual, and £435 on the rent in the same company; total, £8,435. Essex & Co., £400 in the Colonial Mutual, W. Coward, £150 in the Lancashire, Kornblum & Co., £1,000 in the North British, Hicks, Southgate, & Co., £2,000 in the Commercial Union; C. H. Lehmann, £460 in the Yorkshire Society, Whillas and Ormiston £500 in the Guardian, £500 in the Manchester, £1,000 in the Law, Union, and Crown. £500 in the Phoenix, £250 in the Western, £750 in the Australian Alliance, £750 in the Standard; total, £4,250. Cadbury Bros., £1,200 in the Queensland, £1,500 in the Sun; total, £2,700. C. K. Baker, £100 in the Royal, £65 in the Lancashire; total, £165. J. Rosenfeld, £200

in the Atlas, A. O. Thomas, uninsured. Adelaide Clothing Company, £1,000 in the North British, C. T. Henderson, £350 in the State, G. S. Brockenshire, not sure whether covered in this building, N. Solomon & Co., £4,370 in the Alliance, Grand total. £22,480. Not all the stock thus insured was destroyed.



State Library of South Australia - Grenfell Street, Adelaide [B 1808]. Grenfell Street, Adelaide at the north west corner of Hindmarsh Square showing "Solomon's Corner", in November 1910 after a fire that destroyed the building. A crowd, which includes fashionably dressed young ladies, has assembled. For an article entitled 'City Corner [Grenfell Street] Destroyed' see the Register, 17th November, 1910, page 10a. 1910, Francis Gabriel, Part of Acre 102 Collection.

From the Fire Insurance Maps 1912



Observer (Adelaide, SA : 1905 - 1931), Saturday 19 November 1910, page 38

TREMENDOUS FIRE.

Serious Task for Brigade.

City Corner Destroyed.

Business Places Guttled.

November is a month for pyrotechnic displays, but all the minor bonfires of the Fifth rolled into one would have looked insignificant alongside the spectacle witnessed early on Wednesday morning in Grenfell street, when the solid looking pile known as Genders Buildings was a roaring mass of flames. The sight was one of dazzling and awe-inspiring brilliance, and the destruction wrought was tremendous. By the time the outbreak was over, little was left of the block but bare, heat-swollen walls. The comparatively small portion of the premises that was saved from the ravages of the fire was thoroughly saturated by the streams from the hoses. The ruined structure is situated at the north-east corner of Grenfell street, opposite to Hindmarsh square, where it had been a landmark for years.

PEOPLE WHO HAVE LOST.

The firms whose places have been completely wiped out by the fire are Whillas and Ormiston (stationers and printers), N. Solomon & Co. (furniture importers), and the Adelaide Clothing Manufacturing Company, Limited. Others affected by flames or water are C. H. Lehmann (saddler), Hicks, Southgate, & Co. (indent agents and importers, a branch of a Melbourne and Sydney firm), Kornblum & Co. (wholesale agents), Julius Rosenfeld (merchant), the agent for Cadbury's cocoa (T. Coley), C. T. Henderson (sample room), G. D. Lockwood. W. Essex & Co. (warehouse and manufacturers' agents), W. Coward (engraver and jeweller's enameller), G. S. Brokenshire (manufacturers' agent), C. K. Baker (shoe sewer and fair stitcher), M. T. Green (paper ruler), and Arthur O. Thomas (bioscope agent). Whillas & Ormiston had the largest part of the block—nearly a half—and only recently a considerable addition was made at the back of the building to accommodate the increasing demands of their business.

THE ALARM.

The fire seems to have been seen first about a quarter to 3 by F.C. Nicholls. Con-stantle Goldsworthy was not far away when the alarm was given to the Fire Brigade, and before 3 o'clock the engine and reels were playing on the fire.

A GOOD HOLD.

The fire had a good hold of the premises by the time the reels arrived, and for a while the few spectators were witnesses of an immense blaze. The building, which dated from the early eighties, was a substantially built structure of a rather old-fashioned type, with basement and four stories. There is a little doubt where the fire actually started, but apparently the first indication of it was observed by the constables glowing behind the second window facing the square from the Grenfell street corner, on the first floor immediately above the main furniture showroom of Mr. Solomon's establishment, which was on the ground floor.

STATEMENT BY F.C. NICHOLLS.

F.C. Nicholls, when seen by a reporter, stated:—"I first saw the fire at 2.45. I had come along to relieve the officer on the beat, and had just met Constable Goldsworthy, when on coming in sight of Genders Buildings I saw a glare in the middle floor, which I believe is occupied by Messrs. Whillas & Ormiston. I immediately rang up the brigade from the Twin street alarm, and in a few minutes they were on the scene, but by that time the place was burning fiercely." Asked whether there seemed any delay in the arrival of the brigade, the constable said he could not say, but that it seemed a few minutes.

FAINT RED GLOW.

F.C. Goldsworthy remarked, in conversation:—"When first my attention was directed from Hindmarsh square to Genders Buildings a red glow on one of the first-floor windows was so small that it looked at first glance as though it came from a lamp burning inside the place. It was plainly a fire, however, and we hurried over to break the alarm. That was about 2.48 a.m., and the flames must have had a good hold then, as we could hear them crackling within the building, and almost immediately they broke through the eastern windows. A burst of fire seemed to seize the whole building. It began to shoot forth on the south side as well as the east."

HEAT AND FLYING SPARKS.

An old resident of the city declared that spectacularly the fire was perhaps the most impressive since the old Academy of Music in Rundle street—the site of which was not a great distance from Wednesday's blaze—was demolished during a season of the late Mr. T. Hudson in 1886. The heat from Genders Buildings was so terrific that people could not bear to stand during its worst stage anywhere in Grenfell street in the immediate vicinity of the doomed building. They mostly went down the side street by the Import Company's premises, or else watched the proceedings from Hind-marsh square. A north-west breeze created a great draught to stimulate the flames, and conveyed sparks to a dangerous degree over the roadway upon the Import Company's establishment and neighbouring buildings. Ashes and flying debris fell among other places, upon the Earl of Zetland Hotel, in Flinders street, and a constable said he noticed a piece of flaming matter, nearly the size of a fist, fall in the yard of St. Francis Xavier's Cathedral in Wakefield street west. Fortunately, however, there was no spread to other quarters.

A HOPELESS TASK.

The brigade had a hopeless task in trying to save the building. When they arrived the whole corner was well alight, and every place on it looked to be doomed. Fortunately the wind was not in a directly opposite direction, or most likely several buildings in Twin street would have gone too. The firemen fought hard, but gas escaping from the pipes on the ground floor

increased their difficulties. Early in the fight Whillas & Ormiston's printing machinery fell from the middle of the building to the basement with a terrific crash.

AN HOUR'S WORK.

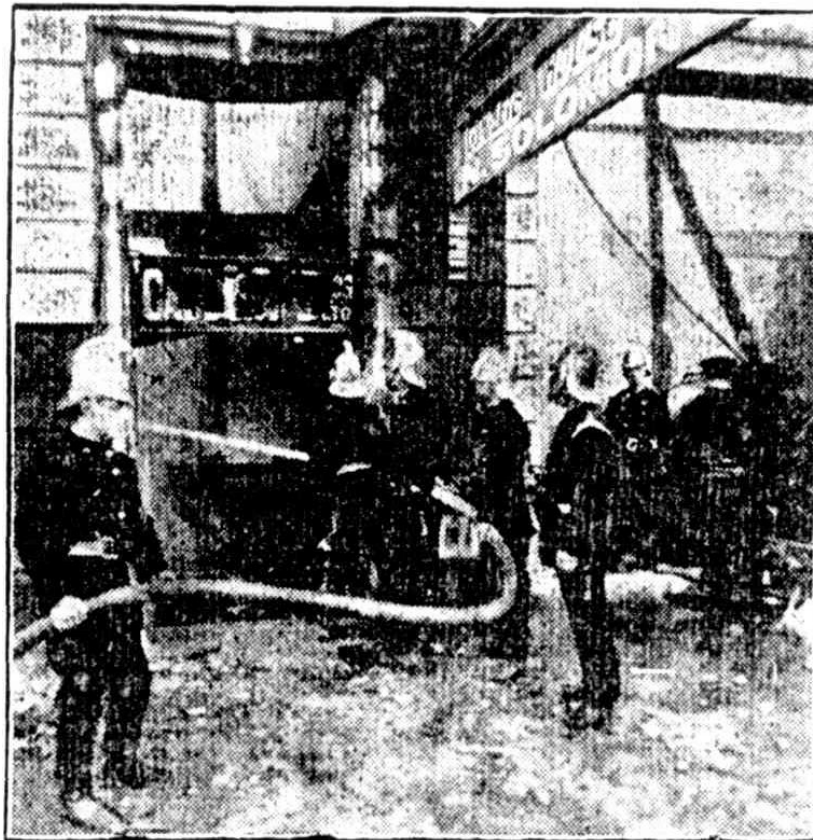
By 4 o'clock the whole corner was a scene of ruins—nearly 100 ft. square and four stories high, facing Hindmarsh square, Grenfell street, Twin street, and an alley at the back. Little but four walls and some partitions remained. In an hour the biggest fire Adelaide has known for several years had done its work.

NO SALVAGE.

Early in the progress of the fire several young men who had congregated offered to go into Solomon's on the ground floor and drag out furniture, but the flames were spreading so rapidly that the police would not let them. Now all the stock has gone, and there will not be any salvage.

HOSES AT WORK.

The Superintendent of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade (Lieut. Rickwood) stated: — "We got the call at 2.51 a.m. from the Twin street alarm. I turned out the head station appliances, and immediately on arrival at the fire summoned the out stations to come in. We got to work with nine lines of hose. The motor appliance pumped for two of them, one steamer in Twin street for two more, and the larger steamer also sent two streams of water on to the flames from the Hindmarsh square side. Three hoses were attached to hydrants. Altogether some 4,000 ft. were in use. The brigade found the building was well alight. Fire was coming from the three upper stories and the roof for two-thirds the length of the place. It evidently originated in the eastern portion, and with the north-



FIREMEN AT WORK.

east wind that was blowing travelled with great speed and fury through the inflammable stuff in the printers' portion to the western side.

THE PLACE SATURATED.

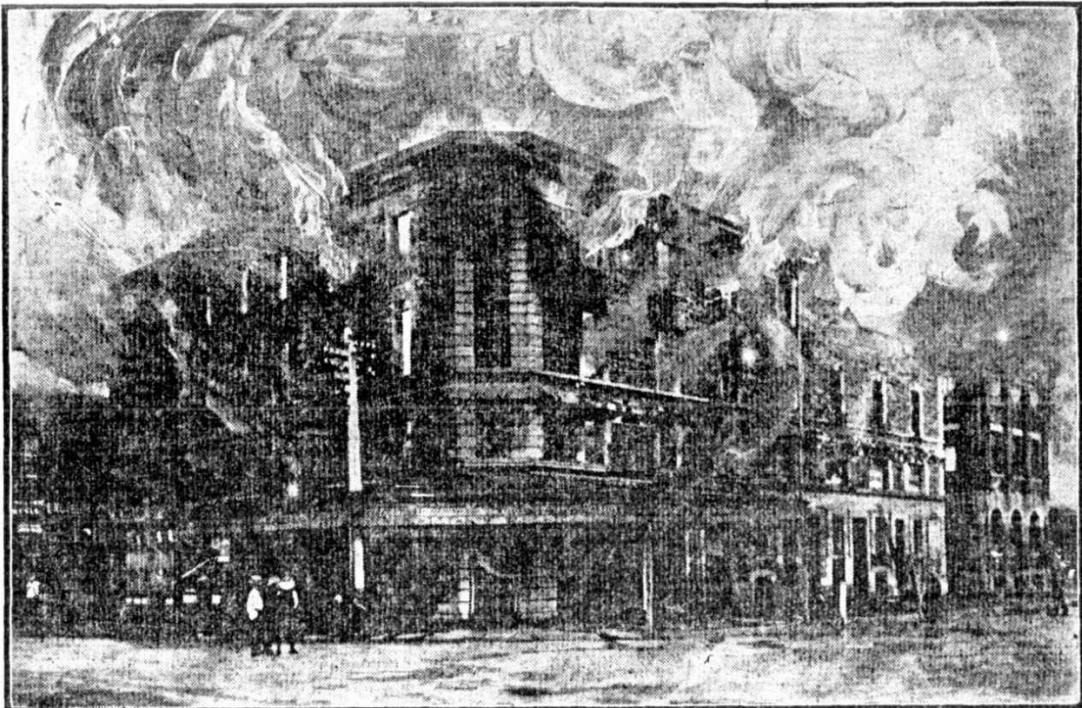
"The whole efforts and strength of the brigade were concentrated upon the objective of checking the fire from reaching to all parts of the building. In that we were partly successful, although much damage has certainly been done by the enormous quantity of water necessary to cope with the outbreak. We had to saturate the place. The main portion of the building is gutted, with the exception of the saddler's shop at the Twin street corner and a few of the rooms along the Twin street side, which are principally water damaged. In the back portion of the building the top floor was swept away by the flames. Other floors have been badly damaged by fire, smoke, and water.

VALUABLE MOTOR APPLIANCE.

"There was a plentiful supply of water, and I may say that the firemen and appliances gave every satisfaction. The pumping power was specially good. The motor appliance maintained a pressure on her pumps of over 130 lb. to the square inch for 2½ hours. Those two jets were splendidly effective. It was undoubtedly the motor appliance that saved the saddler's portion of the premises from being engulfed in the flames."

ACCESSIBLE FROM ALL SIDES.

"What sort of a proposition was it to tackle compared with Bagshaw's blaze?"— "It was different in that it was accessible from all sides. Both premises were far gone by the time we got upon the scene.



THE BLAZING BUILDING.

That is a characteristic of fires discovered in the small hours of the morning. The flames have been having matters all their own way probably for hours before any one happens to notice anything wrong. In Genders Building all we could attempt was simply to confine the fire, and by working from the back portion to save as much as possible."

DANGER of falling walls.

"The walls as they stand now look any-thing but safe? Are they likely to crash down upon the footpath and street below?"—"I thought the south wall was going to do that after the first half-hour of intense heat. It had an ugly incline toward the street, and I kept the men clear from that position. As the masonry began to get cooler, however, this wall seemed gradually to get back more into it's original position. The walls were indeed faithfully built, or they would not have stood the tremendous heat so well. The fact that they remained standing was because, in addition to their stability, the girders and beams are of wood, and gave no twisting influence under stress of heat. Iron girders would have so behaved as to have brought the walls down."

"WARMED UP."

"What was the danger of a spread of the fire spreading to other buildings?"—"The wind might have been blowing from a worse quarter. As it was, we had to closely watch the tailoring premises on the south-western corner of Twin street. They were warmed up considerably, and about half an hour after arrival it was necessary for a couple of men to squirt the windows of that establishment to prevent them from breaking, by which the danger of ignition would have been increased. When we started I did not think much of the burning block could be saved. Still we have retained a little of it intact. A fire like that had probably been smouldering and generating heat for hours before it broke through."

SADDLERY SHOP SPARED.

A fairly thick partition wall kept the flames out of Mr. C. H. Lehmann's saddlery shop until they were got under control, and his premises suffered mostly from a drenching. Mr. Lehmann, who had occupied that business site for about 20 years, remarked to a reporter:—"My stock of saddlery was insured, but also on the premises were personal belongings and possessions of friends that are not covered. They included guns, bicycles, and articles of clothing, but possibly they are not wholly spoiled. I happened to have two small cases of shotgun cartridges in the shop. No doubt they are too moist by this time to create any sensation, even if the fire reached them. In the general disaster to the building I am thankful to see my shop, that has been on that corner so long saved from being wiped out of existence.

CLOTHING FIRM'S LOSS.

The Adelaide Clothing Manufacturing Company occupied the whole of the top floor of the building, and employed about 40 operatives. The manager stated:—"Our plant and stock have gone—lock, stock, and barrel. The machines were complete and up to date, and included was a 4-h.p. motor to supply the necessary power. The business was insured, but I doubt whether the amount could in any way compensate for the loss of equipment alone. We had lately got in a stock of new material for working up into garments, and also had on hand a lot of manufactured stuff ready to be moved off to meet the summer season's demand that was just beginning. However, temporary premises have been secured in Gawler place, and work will be started as usual to-morrow morning. I strongly object to the action of another firm in endeavouring—fortunately unsuccessfully—to take our girls away from us when they heard of our misfortune."

ONE OF THE SUFFERERS.

Mr. Nathan Solomon was an early spectator of the havoc wrought in his business. So far as could be seen, his stock, consisting of furniture and household requisites and clothing, was completely gutted. Among the wreckage visible from the street could be noticed the remains of one piano, and piled up in the basement was a miscellaneous heap comprising charred fragments of articles that had crashed down from the upper floors. Mr. Solomon's establishment occupied the basement, ground, and first floors in the south eastern part of the block. High above him, on the top floor, was the workroom of the Adelaide Clothing Manufacturing Company, where a number of girls were employed in the day time. The interior of the building was on old-fashioned lines, and access to the street from above was obtained by one staircase. There was no doubt that had the outbreak occurred during working hours nothing could have prevented more disastrous results.

"I don't know how the fire started," Mr. Solomon remarked on Wednesday morning. "It appears that the outbreak occurred up stairs. My place has been completely destroyed, and not a particle of salvage is left. I have been continuously engaged in business on these premises for about seven years, and the stock was insured. The books of my firm were in a safe which tumbled from the ground floor to the basement. I do not know

FALL OF A BIG MACHINE.

Between 40 and 50 employes of Whillas and Ormiston (Messrs. Higginbottom, Craig, and Leal) will be affected temporarily at least as a result of the fire. Scarcely a year ago this printing firm substantially added to its premises by the erection of a block at the north end of Genders Buildings. An upper floor of the new wing was used as a planting machine room. It contained about nine machines and a press. Although this part of the establishment was licked by the flames and badly scorched, the contents were apparently not seriously interfered with. Heat and water had left traces on the equipment, but not enough to affect the future working of the machines. The firm at the time of the outbreak was exceedingly busy, and numerous orders will consequently be upset. Some time ago a small fire occurred on the premises, but was safely extinguished. Outside the machine room, in the main block, was a large paper-cutting machine. At the climax of the fire the floor beneath this mass of metal gave way, and it fell with a tremendous clatter through the half-burnt remains of two wooden floors to the basement.

"What caused the outbreak?" one of Messrs. Whillas & Ormiston's staff was asked. "It is impossible to say where the fire began or what actually caused it," was the reply. "It apparently began some where above the ground floor; but no one is in a position to say where." Genders Buildings were the property of the Phillipson family (Messrs. Clement and Ernest Phillipson. Mrs. W. A. Campbell, and Miss G. M. Phillipson).

THE INSURANCES.

Enquiry from Messrs. Hackett & Hunt, attorneys for owners of the building, elicited that the structure itself was insured for £8,000 in the Colonial Mutual Fire Insurance Company. The other losses are, we understand, either wholly or partially covered by insurance, with the exception of that of Mr. A. O. Thomas, bioscope expert who allowed his policy to lapse three weeks ago, and whose loss is nearly £500.



ATTACKING THE FLAMES.

Advertiser (Adelaide, SA : 1889 - 1931), Monday 19 December 1910, page 10

FATALITIES AND ACCIDENTS.

A FIRE ALARM.

On Sunday afternoon the Metropolitan Fire Brigade received a call, and on responding found that the fire was confined to a heap of rubbish in a right-of-way off South-terrace. It was quickly extinguished.