

## DISASTROUS FIRE ON KING STREET

### WRECK TODAY IS GRIM SPECTACLE

**Big Business Blocks But Sorry Skeleton --- Completely Guttred From Top to Bottom--Water Pressure Was Poor, But Firemen Worked Like Beavers in the Storm.**

For eight hours and a half this morning St. John firemen battled with a conflagration on King street, whereby a loss of about \$150,000 was incurred.

As a result of the blaze the building, in which Brock & Paterson carried on a wholesale millinery business, was almost completely gutted and their stock is practically a total loss.

The building occupied by the American Clothing Company was entirely gutted, and their stock destroyed.

The jewelry store of J. W. McDuffie on Canterbury street, and the office and sample rooms of Frank Fales, manufacturers' agent, were completely wiped out. Edward Sears suffered some loss through damage by smoke and water to goods in the store rented by him, situated between the American Clothing Co. and Brock & Paterson.

Others who suffered loss were--Vassie & Co., who had some carpets stored in Brock & Paterson's building on the Canterbury street side; Sidney Melaney, tailor; Hodges Bros., barbers, and Chas. M. Lingley, printer.

The alarm which called the firemen to the scene was rung in about two o'clock by Gordon McIntyre, who, as he was passing along Germain street, heard a crash of falling glass, and on investigating, found flames bursting from the McDuffie premises on Canterbury street. He immediately rang in the alarm from box 6 on Market Square, and the firemen quickly arrived. Subsequently two other alarms were sent in from box 6, and one from box 143 in the North End to bring the North End firemen to the scene.

### FIREMEN LOOKED LIKE HUGE ANIMATED ICICLES

**Cold and Hungry St. John's Fire Fighters Had Hard Fight Before Victory Came.**

Many of the firemen and salvage corps men were working at the scene until after eleven o'clock this morning, when in most cases they were relieved and allowed to go home to breakfast. If ever men earned their money the firemen did last night, for the wind was piercing and the temperature below freezing. The majority of the men this morning resembled

animated icicles more than anything else. Encased in a coating of ice from head to heels, it was with difficulty toward the close of their duties that they were able to work. About 10:30 o'clock this morning, however, the last sign of blaze had been stamped out, and the weary and tired fire-fighters commenced to think about breakfast and a warm fire. They were not through their labors, however, for the hose which lay stretched in all directions had to be taken up and conveyed to the several stations to be thawed out and washed, ready for the next call. It was no simple task, this getting the hose frozen to the ground and thickly coated with ice, so that it was with a great sigh of relief that this operation was at last accomplished and the frozen mass loaded on sleds to be conveyed to the fire stations. The firemen threw themselves into the mass with which, in their ice-covered condition, they blended perfectly. A couple of streams of hose were left at the scene of the conflagration in case of an emergency, and Salvage Corps men were placed on guard in the different buildings.

### WRECKED BUILDINGS PRESENT GRIM SCENE

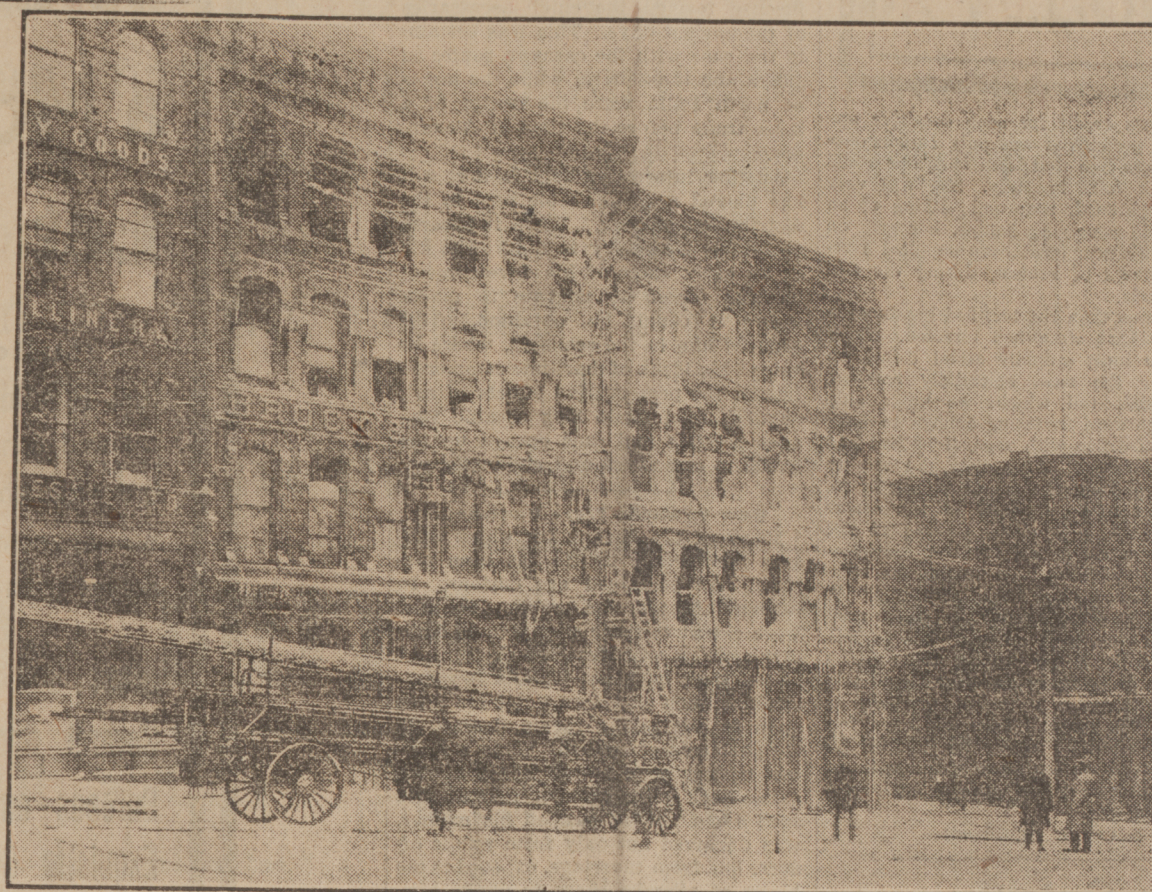
**Covered With Ice They Are But Twisted Remnants of fine business Structures.**

The wrecked buildings presented a curious and uninviting appearance this morning.

Covered from top to bottom with a mass of ice and, with windows and roof gone, they are simply a shadow of what they were yesterday--fine business blocks. Through the windows and doors of the burned structures a mass of wreckage was to be seen, huge timbers burned and twisted, charred walls all covered with ice, and a mass of long, black icicles hanging from the blackened woodwork, with a debris of ruined stock littering the floors.

The immense quantities of water that had been poured into the seething mass during the progress of the fire was flooding the level and was dropping from floor to floor in a perpetual deluge. The buildings were roped off to keep the curious crowd, which kept ever coming and going, away from the danger zone, as gnarled and twisted cornices hanging from the tops of the structures threatened to fall at any moment.

The telephone and electric lighting wires which passed in front of the buildings were covered with a mass of ice, and men were engaged all morning in making repairs caused by the wires having been



LOOKING DOWN KING STREET



LOOKING UP KING STREET

severed or burned during the progress of the conflagration. The lights and telephones of that district were all put out of commission in consequence of the severed connections.

### VALUABLE BOOKS SAVED BY THE SALVAGE CORPS

**Edward Sears Had Paintings and Books Stored in King Street Store.**

Edward Sears, who had a collection of valuable paintings, books and furniture in the store between Brock & Paterson and the American Clothing House, said he did not know what his loss would be. It was partially covered by insurance. The paintings and most of the furniture was removed, but about 3,000 valuable books could not be gotten out in time, though the Salvage Corps men worked hard. Mr. Sears estimates the value of these books at about \$2,500. It is thought that they will not be damaged to any great extent, however, as they were covered up by the Salvage Corps men.

### BROCK & PATERSON'S LOSS ALMOST TOTAL

**They Had Very Heavy Stock---Fire Could Not Come at Worse Time.**

F. W. Roach, of Brock & Paterson, said he thought their loss would be pretty well covered by insurance. They have lost practically everything, some of the goods on the lower floor were covered by the Salvage Corps, but it is thought that even though they were fairly well protected, they are of such a nature that they will be practically ruined. Brock and Paterson had nearly all their spring goods in stock, and the fire could not have come at a worse time, so far as a large stock was concerned. They had on hand one of the largest stocks they have ever carried.

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Asked how the fire would affect their trade, Mr. Roach said: "All our orders will be filled as promptly as possible. We will get our goods delivered, if we have to rent two or three buildings."

For the present Brock & Paterson's office will be found on Prince William street, in the quarters recently vacated by J. Fred Sullivan. The books and papers of the firm were taken there this morning.

### A FURNACE OF FLAME AND ROLLING SMOKE

**The Firemen Battled for Hours Against Great Odds--A Splendid, but Awful Picture.**

When the firemen arrived on the scene they set to work immediately to cope with the fierce flames that were shooting out from the windows of the building on the corner of King and Canterbury streets. Within ten minutes after the alarm was rung in, the building was a seething mass of flames, and it was at once seen that a serious problem confronted the fire-fighters. They, however, got to work, and though it was a long, hard struggle, in which they contended every inch of the ground, they eventually won out, and shortly after five o'clock had the flames under control. It was not, however, until almost eleven o'clock that the water was finally turned off and the firemen were free to go home. It took the entire fire fighting force of the city proper and the North End to keep the blaze in control.

At times the men would be driven back by the fierce flames and clouds of smoke that issued from the burning structures,

but they stuck to their task and too much stock, and the fire could not have come at a worse time, so far as a large stock was concerned. They had on hand one of the largest stocks they have ever carried.

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### CLOTHING HOUSE CAUGHT FROM ELEVATOR SHAFT

**American Clothing House Has Heavy Loss, About One Third Covered by Insurance.**

Lisle Isaacs, proprietor of the American Clothing House, said his loss would be very heavy. His insurance would not be more than a third of the loss. Asked if he knew where the fire had originated, he said as far as he could learn it had started in the basement under J. W. McDuffie's jewelry store, and his premises had caught from the flames coming up through the elevator shaft. He was not prepared to say this morning what his plans for the future were.

### MAY HAVE STARTED FROM THE FURNACE

**Brock & Paterson's Hot Water Furnace was Lighted Yesterday for First Time Since December.**

Concerning the origin of the fire, Mr. McDuffie said he could not speak positively, but he referred to the fact that there was a hot water furnace in the basement under his store, which was used

### EXPECT DAMAGE REACH \$175,000

**Brock & Paterson's Stock Was Practically Wiped Out---American Clothing House Had Heavy Loss---Royal Bank Suffered---Aggregate Insurance About \$110,000**

by Brock & Paterson to heat part of their premises. A fire was started in this furnace yesterday for the first time since last December. A sheet iron pipe, which carried off the smoke, ran through the back of the McDuffie store and the opinion seems to be that this pipe became overheated, causing the fire.

### SMALLER TENANTS' LOSS WAS HEAVY

**J. W. McDuffie, Sidney Melaney and Hodges Bros. Had Not Enough Insurance to Cover Damage.**

The tailoring establishment of Sidney Melaney and the premises of Hodges Bros., barbers, on Canterbury street, were badly damaged by the immense quantities of water that were poured into the building. Mr. Melaney had very little insurance and his loss will be quite heavy.

The fixtures in Hodges Bros. were pretty well protected by the Salvage Corps. The printing establishment of Charles Lingley was damaged slightly by water.

J. W. McDuffie, jeweler, lost quite heavily, his store being completely gutted. Until he opens the safe, Mr. McDuffie said he would not know just what his loss would amount to, but it would be considerably more than the insurance would cover.

### HE SAYS WATER WAS NOT SHORT

**Director Murdoch Denies That There Was Any Shortage at Last Night's Fire.**

Director Murdoch of the water and sewage department was asked this morning regarding the statement in the morning papers relative to an insufficient water supply at last night's fire. Director Murdoch said that as far as he could find out the supply was all right. He said he had on previous occasions cautioned the chief of the fire department not to forget his engines when there was a fire. It was rather peculiar he said to read in the morning papers that at first the supply was very poor but that afterwards it was stated that six powerful streams poured water on the blaze. There had been nothing done to the supply he said during the time of the fire and there was as much water at the start as there was anytime. It should not be expected that there should be the same force of water at the level where it was used last night, as there would be on, say, Water St. or Haymarket Square.

The firm of Brock & Paterson had already received the most of their stock for their spring trade, including 51 cases of hats, millinery goods, etc., recently landed from the Furness steamship Annapolis.

It was stated in the Sun this morning that the premises of Harold Climo, the Germain street photographer, had been damaged by smoke. Mr. Climo says this is not correct, as he was not troubled by the fire in any way. He came pretty close to having trouble, however, as the windows of one of his workrooms are only about 8 or 10 feet above the lower portion of the McLaughlin building, and he considers his escape a very lucky one.

An accident occurred at No. 1 Hook and Ladder station this morning that caused considerable inconvenience. As the horses were being taken in from the fire one of them struck the apparatus connected with the store for heating the water in the engine. Several joints of pipe were disconnected, sending up a cloud of steam and one of the sections of the stove was also started.

Two bits of charred paper, bearing the name of Brock & Paterson, were picked up this morning at Reid's Point, where they had evidently been blown by the high wind. The edges were charred, but the writing could be very easily read.

One of the hind sprays of the ladder truck was broken at last night's fire. There was also a mishap to No. 2 engine by which the furnace was extinguished.

In talking with a number of insurance men this morning with reference to last night's big blaze, the need of a water tower for coping with fires in large buildings was discussed, and the opinion was expressed that the city should take steps to procure one at the earliest possible moment.

Thomas Ingram, of No. 4 hose company, had his head cut by a falling brick, while working at the fire.

Nearly all the coverings possessed by the Salvage Corps companies are now in use in the burned buildings and should another fire occur there are only five covers available. The Salvage Corps men think they should be supplied with more covers.

The Brock & Paterson building is owned by John Prescott, of Calais, and J. A. Lingley is the agent here.

The American Clothing House building is owned by the Royal Bank of Canada. J. A. Lingley said repairs would be made to the Brock & Paterson building immediately.

James Myles has been appointed appraiser by Mr. Lingley and Mr. Bates will act for the insurance men.

A rumor was brought from Westfield today that two cases of smallpox had been discovered at that place. Secretary Burns of the board of health when asked if he had heard of the report said that as far as he could find out there was no truth in the rumor.

The last will and testament of the late Susan Robson was admitted to probate today and testamentary letters were granted to her nephew, Wm. F. Roberts, the executor named in the will. Value of estate, \$110,000; real, \$50,000; personal, E. T. C. Knowles, proctor.

## GOVERNMENT WANTS THE RESIGNATIONS OF THE WHOLE STAFF

**Wholesale Dismissals Will Follow the Canal Lift Lock Scandals----Engineers Passed Work That Was Not Up to Specification---Their Heads The Penalty.**

OTTAWA, Ont., Feb. 13. (Special).--Engineer Holgate, of Montreal, was appointed some time ago by the minister of railways to make a report upon the lift locks at Kirkfield and Peterboro, on the Trent Valley Canal. There were certain deficiencies in construction, and the department was desirous of locating the responsibility as well as ascertaining what was required to put the work in repair. Mr. Holgate deals in detail with both contracts and the work of the engineering staff in connection therewith.

As a result of the investigation, R. B. Rogers, superintending engineer; A. R. Davy, resident engineer, and his assistants, Augustus Sawyers and Inspector D. E. Bethune, and Engineer Spence, will be given an opportunity to resign.

The subject came up for consideration in the cabinet, when it was decided to send a copy of the evidence and the report of Mr. Holgate to the parties concerned with the intention that their resignations would be in order. Mr. Rogers is superintendent of all the work, while Messrs. Davy, Sawyers and Bethune were connected with the Kirkfield lift lock and Mr. Spence with the Peterboro one.

Mr. Holgate, in his report, says that the concrete walls of the lift lock approached

at Kirkfield were not built in accordance with specifications. Plans and specifications of the work were not followed. Plans were altered, but not followed as altered. Superintending Engineer Rogers visited the work frequently, but for all that there was evidence of bad workmanship.

The leaks were owing to the failure to prepare a rock bottom for the concrete wall so as to make it water tight. There was failure to manipulate the concrete properly and the omission of the mortar far from as specified. The manner in which the work was attended to was severely condemned. The contractors, it appears, obeyed the orders of the engineers and inspectors, but they certainly did not carry out the spirit of the specifications.

In reference to the Peterboro lift lock, it was said that the contract was gone into before full information was to be had upon the subject of lift locks. The work was not located as shown by the original plan, and the change in the location affected the whole situation. There was a lack of forethought and care, and the conditions under which the works were carried on were not such, from a commercial and business standpoint, as a private enterprise would recognize.

## THE TIMES NEW REPORTER

Miss February. Quite contrary. What are you doing today? I'd have you know, sir, I'm snowing you, sir, just in the same old way.

Miss Birdie McWhat was dissolved in tears yesterday. Some horrid creature sent Birdie a valentine showing a coarse female with teeth like spikes. This was interpreted by Birdie as a slighting allusion to her new teeth, and she was quite worked up about it.

The Ludlow has been worrying the ferry committee again. On several trips yesterday she refused to make a direct course.

She backed and filled, and seemed anxious to ram some wharf or vessel. The passengers, none of whom had any particular business to attend to, and who would be as well pleased to loaf around the harbor all day as to proceed about their business, were greatly pleased with the excursion.

The aldermen may, after all, have to decide who shall shovel and haul the snow. They had hoped to escape this ordeal, and it is said would have welcomed rain, but the weather man seems to be in league with the enemy.

LOOKS LIKE WAR.

ALGECIRAS, Feb. 15 (Special).--N

withstanding any despatches heretofore sent out, it may be positively stated that the French and German commissioners are still French and German. If any change occurs will bulletin you at once.

Later.

BULLETIN.--It is rumored that one of the French commissioners is about to turn Turk. Great excitement.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 15 (Special).--Miss Alice Roosevelt received a gross of matches and a basket of clothes-pins today in addition to list of wedding gifts previously published.

### ROYAL BANK.

The Royal Bank is insured as follows, in the following companies: In the Norwich Union for \$4,000. The Quebec for \$3,000. The New York Underwriters for \$5,000. The Queen for \$8,000. The Sun for \$5,000. The total insurance on the bank is \$22,000.

### AMERICAN CLOTHING.

Lyle Isaacs is insured as follows: In the Western Assurance Co. for \$1,500 on stock. In the Western Assurance Co. for \$500 on fixtures.