

# BY SUDDEN BLAZE

## Windsor Hotel, New York, Transformed Into a Seething Cauldron of Flames,

### And Terror Stricken Guests Leap Madly to the Pavement Far Below.

#### Fifteen Persons Killed—Forty Persons Injured, Some Fatally—Many Missing—Heroic Rescues by Firemen and Police—Thrilling and Soul Touching Scenes and Incidents.

NEW YORK, March 22.—A flames, which originated from the igniting of a lace curtain, burst forth from the second floor of the Windsor hotel at 47th street and Fifth avenue shortly after 9 o'clock this afternoon, just as the St. Patrick's day parade was passing the building, and in a few moments they had leaped up to the roof and enveloped the entire Fifth avenue and 47th street fronts of the hotel.

Ten minutes later the flames were roaring through the interior of the hotel and all means of escape by means of stairways and elevators was out off, and there was the wildest scene of excitement within and without the building. Hundreds of guests and employees were in the hotel when the fire broke out, and for many of them escape with safety was impossible.

Probably from ten to fifteen lives were lost within a half hour, and 30 or 40 persons were injured in jumping from windows and in rushing through the roaring flames in the corridors and on the stairways. Many who were injured died later at nearby residences and at hotels, and others who made wild leaps to the stone sidewalk were so badly injured that they are still hovering between life and death.

It may be 24 hours or more before the complete list of fatalities may become known, and it will be longer than that before it can be ascertained definitely how many charred bodies are in the mass of fallen masonry that marks the spot where the hotel stood.

It is impossible for anyone to approach near enough to search for missing bodies. The fire was the most spectacular affair of the kind that could be imagined.

When it broke out Fifth avenue was crowded with people watching the St. Patrick's day parade, a fact which interested not a little with the movements of the firemen and police. As soon as the flames were first discovered, shooting from the windows, that part of the procession which was near the building came to a halt, and in a few minutes the parade was disbanded, for the police came rushing toward the fire from every direction and as far as they were able drove the people from the streets. One alarm after another was turned in, and the first of the fire engines was not long in appearing upon the scene.

In addition to the regular guests of the hotel the windows were crowded by a large number of spectators, residents of the city, who had congregated to witness the parade.

Soon after the first alarm was given people in the lower floors of the hotel, those who had easy access to the street and stairway, commenced to pour out of the building in great numbers, but it very soon became apparent that a great many of the occupants of the hotel were either panic stricken or were unable to make their way to the ground floor.

Windows were thrown up on every side of the building, and guests, mostly women, in all stages of terror, made their appearance and commenced to make frantic appeals for assistance to the crowd standing below. As the flames gathered about them they became more and more terror stricken, and presently several of them stood upon the narrow window sills and beckoned to the spectators below that they were about to leap to the streets. The men collected upon the sidewalks ready to offer any assistance that they could, and in the meantime a number of women left the window sills and dropped in the street. In most of the cases the efforts to catch them and break their awful fall were unavailing, for they struck the sidewalk and in most cases broken limbs were the result.

Imminent danger of catching fire, but the flames were brought under control before they could reach any of them. There were many thrilling scenes in the hotel during the early stage of the fire.

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The boy fired a chain attached to the fire alarm, but the chain broke, and then he cried out an alarm of fire and ran to the floor below. The blaze was then holding up everything on the Fifth avenue end of the building, and the lad, when he got to the floor above the main hall, ran into the American dining room and gave the alarm there.

A few persons were in the dining room and they escaped. When the fire reached the main floor, Warren F. Leland, the proprietor of the hotel, was in the rear of the long hall, and the boy shouted to him that the building was on fire. On Mr. Leland's instructions the clerks tried to save the books and papers, and the boy then rushed down the basement stairway and alarmed the women who were at work in the laundry. It is believed all of them escaped.

One of the most daring rescues effected by the firemen occurred on the fifth floor of the Fifth avenue end. A crippled woman was seen at a window, and she succeeded in reaching the window immediately underneath. One of them climbed over the coping over the window on which he was standing and then stepped over her hands despairingly. He then swung the woman clear of the window and lowered her safely in the arms of his companion. The assistance of several other firemen passed the woman down to the street.

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Night Watchman MacNichol half asphyxiated. Hanna lowered him by means of a wire to the escape, two stories below, and let himself down in the same way. His hands were badly cut by the wire. Then Hanna assisted the old man down the fire escape.

A crippled woman was found lying on the floor of a room on the fourth floor, unable to move, and was carried in safety to the street.

Policeman Luke Milroy rescued three women from the fourth floor and was badly burned about the hands and face, and his uniform was nearly burned from his back.

A Brooklyn fireman, who came over to see the parade, saw a woman on the seventh story right over where the fire occurred first. He rushed upstairs and rescued Kate Flanagan, a domestic. She was badly burned and injured by falling debris, and was unconscious when brought down.

Thomas McPherson, an employe of the government docks in Brooklyn, went through the fire and smoke five stories and rescued Mrs. R. Butler, who was unconscious from shock and fright. McPherson was so badly burned that he had to be taken to the hospital.

All of these rescues and many others occurred within a period of a few minutes.

#### THRILLING INCIDENTS.

Meanwhile electrifying scenes of frenzied men and women were being enacted on almost every floor of the great building. How many persons are buried in the ruins is not known, but at least three or four persons were seen to jump, whose bodies have not been recovered. A young man, apparently an employe of the hotel, was on the 46th street side of the hotel. Another unknown man jumped on the Fifth avenue side, and two more were seen to jump from the rear. Shortly after that two women jumped from the roof to the courtyard below. It is known that of these two at least one is dead.

Eye witnesses say they saw a woman throw a child from a window and fall a moment later herself, just before the collapse of one of the walls. As yet no trace of these bodies has been found.

Abner McKinley, the brother of President McKinley, had four rooms on the ground floor of the hotel. Mrs. McKinley and her daughter occupied the rooms with Abner McKinley. Miss Mabel had ordered a coach for a drive at 3.30 o'clock, and was dressing for it when the alarm of fire was given. She was in her dressing gown at the time. She saw the smoke, and becoming frightened, opened the window and looked out. She saw a black and white man. She walked half a block and found her carriage waiting. She was driven to the Hotel Buckingham, where she telephoned to her father at his office at No. 30 Broad street.

Mrs. McKinley and her daughter, Helen McKinley, were entertaining Mrs. John Sherwood, the authoress. Mrs. McKinley, her daughter and their guest got out, assisted by two men. The women became separated. Mrs. McKinley went to the residence of Rev. Dr. Morgan at No. 3 East 45th street, and Miss Helen McKinley to the residence of the banker, Richard T. Wilson, at 511 Fifth avenue. The McKinleys afterwards went to the Manhattan hotel, where they had a joyful reunion of the family. They lost everything except the clothes they wore.

Dr. F. P. Brown of 509 Fifth avenue and A. E. Brown of Congress Heights, Washington, knowing the McKinleys were in the hotel, rushed to the McKinleys afterwards went to the Manhattan hotel, where they had a joyful reunion of the family. They lost everything except the clothes they wore.

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At the corner of 47th street and Fifth avenue, street across from the hotel, is the home of Miss Helen Gould, and at her direction many of the injured were carried there and treated by physicians and nurses whom she had sent for.

In the meantime the chief of police had telephoned to every hospital in the city asking that assistance be sent to the sufferers. Ambulances followed their way through the crowds as quickly as possible, and the injured people who had made the frightful leaps from the hotel windows were placed in them and removed to the hospitals. Several occupants of the hotel appeared at the windows of the sixth and seventh stories, and even on the roof, and made their leaps to the streets from those points.

Very few of them escaped either instant death or injuries which resulted in their death a short time later.

In the meantime the entire building was being enveloped in flames, which shot out from every window and formed a picture which struck terror to all those who were witnessing it. Within forty or forty-five minutes after the fire broke out the walls on the Fifth avenue side showed every indication of falling, and presently with an awful crash they struck the asphalt covering of the street in front of the hotel, and caused the hundreds of people who were standing there to scatter in every direction. This weakened the walls on the 46th and 47th street sides, and they followed a moment later. When the walls fell the brick and mortar and twisted girders and corrugated iron filled the streets on three sides of the hotel.

The doorsteps and iron fences in front of the houses on the opposite side of the street from the hotel were wrecked by the falling walls, and the amount of debris piled in the streets was so great that travel will be impeded for several days. The northeast wing of the hotel continued to burn for half an hour after the walls of the other part of the building fell. The firemen continued to play streams upon the flames and also upon all the adjoining buildings, including Miss Gould's residence, which seemed in

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The first horror occurred just fifteen minutes after the fire broke out. A woman appeared at the window of the fourth floor. She held out her arms to the crowd below. Then she raised her hands as if in supplication, and in a moment climbed to the windows and leaped. She turned about like a top and struck the iron railing in front of the hotel. Her body seemed to be impaled there, but it fell into the area way. She was dead. The woman was identified as Mrs. Amelia Parlock of Irvington, N. Y.

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Mrs. A. H. Fuller of Pittsburg, Pa., then appeared with her maid at the window of the fourth story. It seemed like an age before the ladder was lowered. Firemen ran up and with difficulty brought down Mrs. Fuller and her maid. Just as she was gotten out of the window a middle aged woman was seen at a window just north of that at which the ladder was placed. The woman, tearing she would not be rescued, prepared to jump. She was warned to keep back, and became panic stricken and stepped back into the dense smoke that was pouring from the window. It seemed as though she had jumped into the flames below in despair. A hook and ladder man seeing the desperation of the woman, seized a scaling ladder and went up story after story, through the blinding smoke. He climbed to the coping just as the woman reappeared. The fireman seized her by the waist, and holding her tight by the arms, she was lowered to the ground. The woman was then carried to the hospital.

As soon as the firemen could get their scaling ladders into position they climbed the sides of the building and entered at every window where there was an unfortunates guest appealing for assistance, and many cases of heroic rescue were witnessed by the throng in the street.

At the corner of 47th street and Fifth avenue, street across from the hotel, is the home of Miss Helen Gould, and at her direction many of the injured were carried there and treated by physicians and nurses whom she had sent for.

In the meantime the chief of police had telephoned to every hospital in the city asking that assistance be sent to the sufferers. Ambulances followed their way through the crowds as quickly as possible, and the injured people who had made the frightful leaps from the hotel windows were placed in them and removed to the hospitals. Several occupants of the hotel appeared at the windows of the sixth and seventh stories, and even on the roof, and made their leaps to the streets from those points.

Very few of them escaped either instant death or injuries which resulted in their death a short time later.

In the meantime the entire building was being enveloped in flames, which shot out from every window and formed a picture which struck terror to all those who were witnessing it. Within forty or forty-five minutes after the fire broke out the walls on the Fifth avenue side showed every indication of falling, and presently with an awful crash they struck the asphalt covering of the street in front of the hotel, and caused the hundreds of people who were standing there to scatter in every direction. This weakened the walls on the 46th and 47th street sides, and they followed a moment later. When the walls fell the brick and mortar and twisted girders and corrugated iron filled the streets on three sides of the hotel.

The doorsteps and iron fences in front of the houses on the opposite side of the street from the hotel were wrecked by the falling walls, and the amount of debris piled in the streets was so great that travel will be impeded for several days. The northeast wing of the hotel continued to burn for half an hour after the walls of the other part of the building fell. The firemen continued to play streams upon the flames and also upon all the adjoining buildings, including Miss Gould's residence, which seemed in

imminent danger of catching fire, but the flames were brought under control before they could reach any of them. There were many thrilling scenes in the hotel during the early stage of the fire.

As soon as it broke out a hall boy discovered the flames while passing along the fourth floor, immediately the rooms occupied by President McKinley's brother, Abner McKinley, and his family.

The boy fired a chain attached to the fire alarm, but the chain broke, and then he cried out an alarm of fire and ran to the floor below. The blaze was then holding up everything on the Fifth avenue end of the building, and the lad, when he got to the floor above the main hall, ran into the American dining room and gave the alarm there.

A few persons were in the dining room and they escaped. When the fire reached the main floor, Warren F. Leland, the proprietor of the hotel, was in the rear of the long hall, and the boy shouted to him that the building was on fire. On Mr. Leland's instructions the clerks tried to save the books and papers, and the boy then rushed down the basement stairway and alarmed the women who were at work in the laundry. It is believed all of them escaped.

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Inquiry made by her aunt, Mrs. Towney of Demorest, N. J.; Walsh, Mary, servant; Ward, Annie, chambermaid.

NEW BRUNSWICK POLITICS. James Robinson, M. P. for Northumberland Explains Some Points.